



THE WILDEST PLACE

NEWSLETTER OF THE SELWAY BITTERROOT FRANK CHURCH FOUNDATION



SUMMER 2020

SUMMER 2020

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SELWAY BITTERROOT
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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.

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

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FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

The summer of 2020 has reminded us what amazing public lands Idaho and Montana have to offer. The campgrounds are full and the trails are teeming with hikers and backpackers. It's almost impossible to find camping, paddling, biking, backpacking or other outdoor equipment in the stores.

SBFC's primary mission is Wilderness and wildland stewardship in partnership with the US Forest Service. Our staff, Wilderness fellows and volunteers are out clearing those trails ahead of you; removing hundreds of trees, repairing and replacing trail, adding water bars and picking up trash.

Your membership, attendance at community events, purchase of a Wilderness License Plate for your vehicle, or buying raffle tickets funds this mission. Please continue your support. With Covid-19 we have had to cancel or postpone most volunteer projects this summer, as well as several community events such as Mountainfilm on Tour. This reduces our annual revenue, which in turn can affect our summer 2021 programs.

We will email you in the coming months with our fall raffle details. Every dollar you contribute is another dollar towards keeping trails clear. Also, we plan to make some changes to our Mountainfilm schedule and will post dates on our website event calendar. You can access the calendar at selwaybitterroot.org/events. If you'd like to be more involved with SBFC and have an idea for a community event near you, contact me.

Together we can enjoy and maintain the resources in our back yards. Thank you for your support.

See you on the trail,

NANCY FELDMAN
Board Chair



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Wow! What a year it has been for us all!

Instead of just looking at the challenges and risks presented by the pandemic, we decided to focus on the opportunities.

We hired and trained 7 seasonal Wilderness Stewards and Crew members. Three are new to SBFC, four have been with us before. We recruited and trained four Wilderness Ranger Fellows from the University of Montana. Our four Fellows are working on the Bitterroot, Nez Perce-Clearwater and Salmon-Challis National Forests.

We have also been able to restructure some of our volunteer projects and keep the wilderness stewardship going.

Pre-season, we worked closely with our FS partners to develop an approved Covid-19 management plan with protocols to help SBFC staff and volunteers manage risk in and out of the field. My hat is off to our dedicated partners and SBFC staff for their commitment to safety! And to you, our caring supporters—we could not have gotten here without you!

I'm pleased to introduce you to our terrific 2020 Wilderness Ranger **Fellows** (page 5). I suspect you might be wondering why we transitioned from the term "Intern" to the term "Fellow". In 2019 the Forest Service made changes to their internship program. They asked me to make the "Intern" to "Fellow" change so that each program has a distinct identity. SBFC's exceptional training and wilderness experiences sets our program apart. The Wilderness Ranger Fellowship program can be used as college credit and as a steppingstone in professional development.

A final note. SBFC staff and board share the belief that it is time to listen, learn and act in support of anti-racism. We believe that fostering diversity and inclusiveness must be an ongoing process and that diversity is not a project with an end point. Our 2019 strategic plan identifies the need to build diversity within our programs. We are committed to making change.

SALLY FERGUSON
Executive Director



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



This is the ninth installment of interviews collected from our past Fellows. Established in 2009, the SBFC Wilderness Ranger Fellow Program is our signature program. SBFC provides a high level of training and guidance for university-level students who have coursework in wilderness, environmental studies, or recreation management.



HOW DID YOU USE THE INFORMATION YOU LEARNED WHILE BEING A FELLOW IN YOUR COURSEWORK OR NEW CAREER?

This fellowship was so valuable in many ways. In terms of academics, the experiences I had and the personal connections I made gave me a broader perspective on textbook information and classroom conversations. I adopted more of a “national” view of wilderness and wildlands, rather than the east coast perspective that my peers had. In terms of jobs, I was able to work at Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge as a biology intern where I was able to work independently in a remote area. I performed some trail work but mainly did water quality testing, education, and other biological field projects.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS?

I’d like to work as a field biologist in either Australia or Central/South America. I plan to continue my Americorps work at the Peregrine Fund until September 2021. After that I hope to start working on my masters and doing field research. Following grad school I hope to be doing some more fieldwork and biology jobs and maybe it will lead me to one of these great places.



HEATHER MORRIS - WILDERNESS RANGER FELLOW - 2017

COLLEGE CREDENTIALS

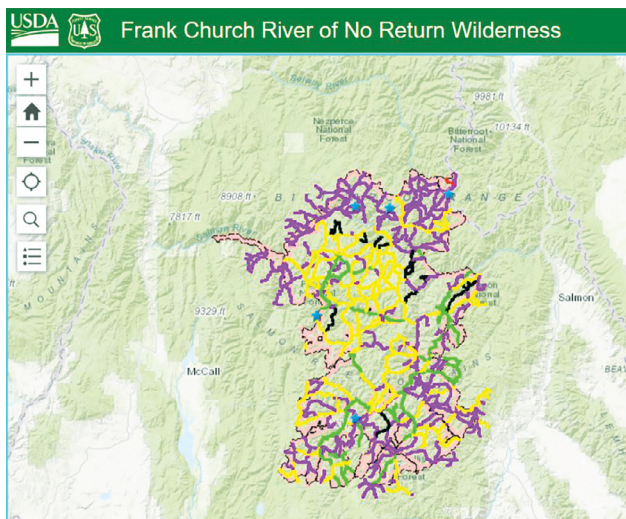
State University of New York – Major: Environmental Science and Forestry

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR CAREER PATH THUS FAR?

Post graduation I took a bit of a break to complete a thru hike of the Appalachian Trail. I started the six-month journey on June 3 and finished November 30. Soon after I completed the trail I received an offer from the Peregrine Fund’s World Center for Birds of Prey, located in Boise, ID. It is an Americorps position and I am a Conservation Educator. Because Covid has forced the facility to be shut down I’m unable to do the educating component, but have focused on bird handling and habitat work. I’ve actually built trail (an SBFC acquired skill) that meanders throughout a native plant garden located at the facility. I also get to work with 27 avian ambassadors that include a harpy eagle, kestrels, milky eagle owl and peregrine falcons. I’m hopeful we’ll be able to open soon and I’ll get to educate the public about these wonderful birds.

WHAT WAS THE MOST POIGNANT EXPERIENCE YOU HAD AS AN INTERN?

It was the Lottie Lake hitch. We were deep in the backcountry and camped next to a beautiful lake. My crewmembers and I were able to swim each day after a hard day of trail work. To top it off we were surprised by Erika Van Havel and Sally Ferguson when they came to meet us with packstock and watermelon. What a treat!



NEW FCRONR WILDERNESS TRAIL MAP RELEASED

The Payette National Forest announces the release of the FCRONR Wilderness Trail Maintenance Status Map.

“This map is easy to use,” said Joshua Simpson, Krassel District Wilderness Manager and Recreation Specialist, “Just simply navigate to the area of interest, zoom in to the desired scale and click on your trail of interest.” A box will pop-up and display the following: Trail Name, Trail Number, Status, Maintainer (USFS, SBFC, ITA, etc.), Comment, Date Last Maintained and Miles. You can also click on a link to zoom into the trail. Trails status is color coded based upon the maintenance status. In addition, users can now submit comments or photos describing trail conditions.

To access the map go to<https://bit.ly/2YtUNpR>.

WELCOME TO OUR SEASONAL STAFF

We're blending old with new this year and welcoming returning staff, two past SBFC Wilderness Ranger Fellows (2015 & 2018) and some new additions. Each person packs a punch of experience, enthusiasm, and backcountry skills.



**CARLY STINSON-SALMON-CHALLIS
FRANK CHURCH-WILDERNESS STEWARD**

Carly is returning to SBFC after graduating from the SBFC Wilderness Ranger Fellow program in 2015. Since then, Carly has worked on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest. Carly is from Olympia, WA where she first discovered backpacking. She has spent all of her adult-life summers working on trails and in the backcountry. Carly attended the University of Montana.



**CONNOR ADAMS-NEZ PERCE-
CLEARWATER POWELL-LEAD
WILDERNESS STEWARD**

This is Connor's fourth season with SBFC. Connor grew up in New York State and cut his backcountry teeth in the Adirondack Mountains. After some time living abroad and a northbound thru hike of the Appalachian Trail, he came out west for two seasons in the Bob Marshall Wilderness before joining SBFC.



**PETE CHAPPELL-NEZ PERCE-
CLEARWATER-TRAIL CREW LEADER**

This is Pete's first season with SBFC. Pete grew up hiking, camping, and fishing in Eastern Pennsylvania and attended the University of Delaware. Pete decided to move across the country on a whim after getting a job in the Montana backcountry. During that season Pete fell in love with Wilderness trail work and the community surrounding it. Pete is very excited to work with SBFC.



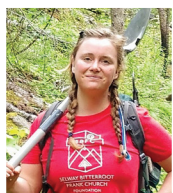
**JOSH PAGE-SALMON-CHALLIS
FRANK CHURCH-WILDERNESS
STEWARDS LIAISON**

Josh is celebrating his third season with SBFC. Josh grew up in rural Michigan. He fell in love with the west on a summer trip to Rocky Mountain National Park. In 2015, Josh joined the Conservation Corps, where he first learned trail maintenance. In 2016 and 2017, he worked in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming, where he co-led crews, built a pack bridge, and loved making crosscuts sing.



**MIKE SKLADANOWSKI-NEZ PERCE-
CLEARWATER-TRAIL CREW MEMBER**

This is Mike's first season with SBFC. Mike grew up in a small mountain town in Colorado, but moved to Montana to pursue a degree in Wildlife Biology. Mike's first trail crew job was with Montana Wilderness Association in 2017 and he has been hooked on Wilderness ever since. Mike worked as a Wilderness Ranger Intern on the Deschutes NF.



**JUSTINE BRIGHT-SALMON-CHALLIS
FRANK CHURCH-WILDERNESS STEWARD**

This is Justine's second season working for SBFC. Prior to that Justine was a Wilderness Ranger Fellow with SBFC in 2018. Justine is reminded more poignantly every year what nourishment and sanctuary this work provides. She says she expects moments of being tired or frustrated to the point of tears and she wouldn't have it any other way- it wouldn't be so rich and raw without that. This will be her first full season in the Frank.



**SHANNON FILBEY-NEZ PERCE-
CLEARWATER-TRAIL CREW MEMBER**

This is Shannon's first season with SBFC. Shannon hails from an off-grid homestead tucked between the Pacific rainforests and mesic lands of the Northern Coast Range. While completing a B.S. in Environmental Studies and Watershed Sciences at Southern Oregon University, he explored and studied the wildernesses and natural areas throughout Northern California and Southern Oregon and contributed to trail projects throughout the region.

2020 WILDERNESS RANGER FELLOWS

By January 2020 SBFC had received over 60 applications for our Wilderness Ranger Fellow program. By February we had interviewed several strong candidates from across the US. In March everything changed. We followed state and local guidelines, put safety at the top of the list, and shifted gears. We recruited college candidates who live in Missoula. We also recruited fewer candidates in response to Forest Service concerns about Covid-19 exposure in local communities. We are delighted to introduce our Wilderness Ranger Fellows for 2020. They have adapted to the situation and embraced the experience. Our faith in the future is always boosted when we see such strong advocates and leaders poised to launch their careers in the next couple of years. The 2020 WRFs began training in June and returned to school mid-August. It was a short, but mighty, season. You can read the enlightening and entertaining WRF blogs by going to www.selwaybitterroot.org/blog.



MADISON MURRILL



Bitterroot National Forest - University of Montana, Resources Conservation

Madi has been fortunate to spend two seasons working in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Area and Bitterroot National Forest. Her appreciation for Wilderness grows with each hitch spent helping to maintain trails, as well as during off-time trips. Madi is originally from New Hampshire and began to love backpacking and conservation of public lands while growing up in the northern Appalachians. She believes that stewardship within the realm of outdoor recreation is important and she is excited to have the opportunity to be a part of SBFC's mission!



PHOEBE MATHER



Bitterroot National Forest - University of Montana, Geoscience BS with GIS Certificate

Phoebe is from Santa Barbara, CA, but grew up on a sailboat while she and her family sailed around the world from 2005-2011. She started studying Geology at SBCC and was originally drawn to the courses that involved field work. Now studying GIS as well at UM, she is dedicated to preserving wild spaces.



ISABELLE MILLS



Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest - University of Montana, Parks Tourism and Recreation Management, Resource Conservation/Minor in Wilderness and Civilization

Isabelle was born and raised in Bozeman, Montana and has been a backpacking guide in Missoula and North Carolina. She likes to spend as much time as possible in the outdoors and is passionate about conservation and maintaining public lands.



WILL STOSKOPF



Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest - University of Montana, Biology/Biochemistry

Will grew up skiing and hiking around Anchorage, Alaska, and spent a summer in high school working for the Municipality of Anchorage helping to build and maintain trails. Will is passionate about the wilderness for the incredible recreation and solace it brings.

WARREN MILLER WILDERNESS RANGER FELLOW SCHOLARSHIP

The Warren Miller Wilderness Ranger Intern Scholarship was established in honor of Warren Miller, 1945-2014. Warren worked as a Wilderness Ranger in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, on the historic Moose Creek District, from 1971-1991. He was a traditional tools expert who taught himself the intricate art of filing crosscut saws. Warren parlayed his experience and knowledge into teaching courses in "Crosscut Maintenance and Sharpening" for 20 years. He has trained hundreds of wilderness devotees to use and care for crosscut saws. He has inspired even more to respect, appreciate, and steward Wilderness for today and, more importantly, for future generations.

Warren is remembered for his integrity, curiosity, and enduring dedication to Wilderness. His passion for the Selway-Bitterroot and his commitment to the SBFC Foundation endures through this scholarship.

Each year one of the SBFC Foundation Wilderness Ranger Interns is chosen to receive this Scholarship award based on their curiosity and passion for the area, vision for the future, and their leadership qualities.

Donations to this fund directly support the Warren Miller/Wilderness Ranger Internship Scholarship.

The Frank

Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of The Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.
1980 - 2020

40



The Frank Church Institute

Greg Cairns Photo

Albertsons Cos.
HP, Inc.

Middle Fork of the Salmon River “Clam Shell Rock”

For a \$25 contribution to the Frank Church Institute, a copy of this 24" X 36" poster will be sent to you. To order a poster, please go to: give.boisestate.edu/FrankChurch

CELEBRATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FRANK CHURCH RIVER OF NO RETURN WILDERNESS

By: **Larry LaRocco, Former Congressman and Frank Church Institute Board Member**

Reprint from: **Boise State University – Frank Church Institute – Spring Newsletter 2020**

It is important to celebrate this anniversary as a community of citizens who cherish our heritage and revere our democratic institutions. We must shine a light on the history of this legislation together with the courageous leadership it took to advance the proposal through Congress into law. This rich history is democracy in its best and most noble form.

On July 23, 1980, President Carter signed into law legislation championed by Senator Frank Church to protect statutorily the River of No Return Wilderness. It was a great day for Idaho, the United States, and the world.

This magnificent 2.3 million acre area is now commonly referred to as “The Frank.” That name is a fitting tribute to a true conservation champion, Senator Frank Church.

Frank Church was a giant in the conservation arena: The Wilderness Act, Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Hells Canyon Preservation, Sawtooth National Recreation Area, Gospel-Hump Wilderness, St. Joe River protection and, of course, the River of No Return Wilderness.

The Frank encompasses approximately 5% of Idaho’s land mass and is the largest wilderness in the lower 48 states. Approximately 190 species of wildlife have been identified in The Frank. The Frank includes 125 miles of the Salmon River in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system, protecting the Middle Fork and Salmon River watersheds. It serves as an untouched laboratory for scientists. It welcomes hunters, hikers, and horses. In-holdings are protected, jet boats are allowed to plow the mighty Salmon River, and private planes fly into back-country airstrips. Fair compromises were worked out—but the boundaries of the Idaho and Salmon River Breaks Primitive Areas were kept intact. This ecosystem was not marginalized.

This legislation was championed by Senator Church at a time of some personal political peril. However, he never considered the option to delay. As the senior U.S. Senator from Idaho, he steered the legislation through Congress. He demonstrated great leadership by putting the future of the nation ahead of his political fortunes.

On November 20, 1979, the U.S. Senate voted 69 to 18 to end 15 years of controversy over the status of the primitive areas of Idaho. The U.S. House soon followed and the legislation was put on President Carter’s desk for signature.

A mission of the Frank Church Institute is to highlight issues on how democracy survives and thrives. It is worth noting that this legislation



Marble Creek Skyline

was truly bi-partisan, and the Congress acted in a way that is truly in line with the ideals of our founding fathers.

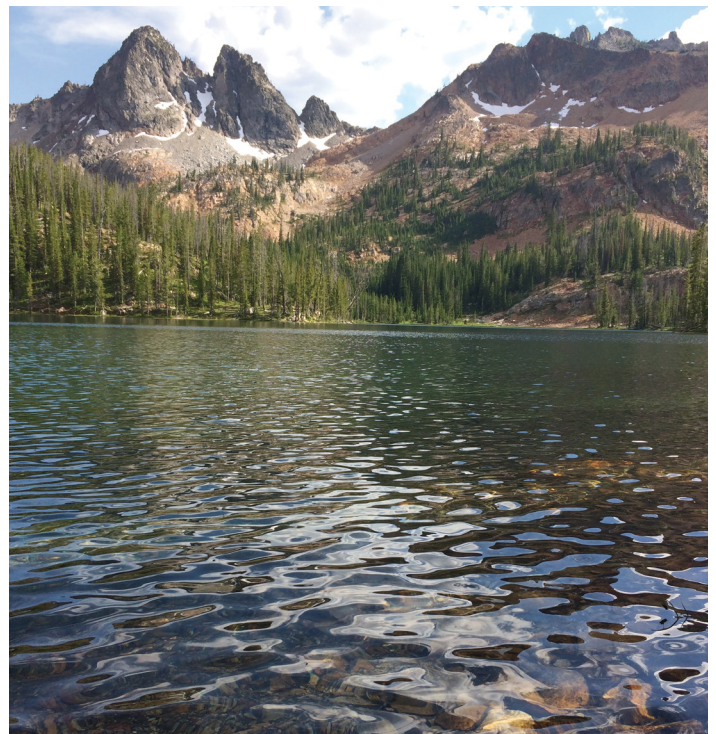
Just before Frank Church died in 1984, his Idaho colleague, Senator James McClure, introduced legislation to re-name the Wilderness the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.

This gesture was magnanimous, timely, and appropriate. Those of us who loved Frank Church also love “The Frank.”

Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus had been a key player in pushing this legislation within the Carter Administration, and he joined Senator Church at the White House as the legislation was signed into law.

At the signing ceremony Senator Church said, “This is a proud day for Idaho and Idahoans. The River of No Return Wilderness is finally a reality. The magnificent Salmon River Mountains now has statutory protection. I have never known a single person who has not changed after a stay in the wilderness, not stronger after a week on a trail in the Salmon River country, or more humble after having weathered a winter storm there. The craft with which this part of God’s world was made runs eventually into the minds and characters of those who explore these mountains and woods. Because America was built up from the wilderness, the wilderness itself has shaped our character as a people. We must never forget this fact. We are strong and inventive because of our exposure to the exhilarations and dangers of living in a wild land. The River of No Return Wilderness will preserve for all time a portion of the western frontier. It will be a vast refuge for fish and game; it will provide protection for our watershed; and most importantly, it will be a haven for all those who, from time to time, feel the need to simply get away from it all. This day belongs to all Idahoans. The conservationists and sportsmen are well represented at this ceremony, as are Idaho’s mining and lumber

industries. The fact that so many have come two thousand miles from Idaho to watch the President sign this bill demonstrates that it commands broad support in our state. It also proves that it is possible to work together to build a sound future for the generations that will follow ours.”



Cabin Creek



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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]."