



SELWAY BITTERROOT
FRANK CHURCH
FOUNDATION

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Contact:
Caitlin Straubinger,
Communications & Development
Director
cstraubinger@selwaybitterroot.org
208-781-2304

The Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation awards six wilderness education grants

Boise, Idaho -- The Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation is pleased to announce six awardees of the Connie Saylor Johnson Wilderness Education Grant. In its first three years, the Fund has provided approximately \$18,000 to organizations in Idaho, Montana, and Iowa in support of wilderness education.

The Connie Saylor Johnson Wilderness Education Fund (CSJWEF) will provide support to the following projects focused on wilderness stewardship:

- 1) Alzar School, Cascade, ID - "Wilderness: An Exploration of History, Stewardship, and Diverse Perspectives" - Presentations during outdoor educational trips that focus on the history of Wilderness, challenges to wilderness areas, and how to make wilderness more inclusive.
- 2) B.E.A.R., Hamilton, MT - "Wilderness Connection Days" - An outdoor mentoring program for elementary and high school students that incorporates experiential education around the Wilderness Act and history, Leave No Trace, and ways to contribute to wilderness stewardship.
- 3) Dallas County Conservation, Perry, IA - "2024 Dallas County IDAWA Trek" - A wilderness backpacking trip to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness to work on a restoration project and educate Iowa students about federally designated Wilderness.
- 4) Evergreen Kids Corner, Hamilton, MT - "Wilderness Bonding Workshops" - Four workshops for parents and children on respectful wilderness engagement as part of a community-wide curriculum focused on outdoor learning, family bonding activities, and decreased screen time for children.

- 5) Sussex School Outdoor Program, Missoula, MT – “Students Share the Wilderness” – A students-teaching-students program that enables older students to teach younger students, teachers, administrators, and parents about wilderness stewardship. Funds help support guest speakers with expertise in wilderness stewardship.
- 6) Wilderness Watch, Missoula, MT – “60th anniversary of the Wilderness Act celebration” - A fall 2024 celebration at Wilderness Gateway to celebrate the historic Wilderness Act with speakers, panel discussions, music, food, and camping.

The grant program honors the late Connie Saylor Johnson, a lifelong educator and champion of Idaho and Montana Wilderness. After moving to Idaho from Iowa after a career as a high school teacher, she sustained a decades-long effort to introduce Midwestern teachers and students to the Idaho wilderness through hands-on service projects. The CSJWEF Fund was established in 2019 by Connie’s friends and family to honor her commitment to hands-on wilderness education experiences for people of all ages. The fund has grown steadily since Connie’s death in 2018 through contributions from supporters of wilderness education. The fund is administered by the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation, where Connie served as a staff and board member from 2009 to 2018.

Applications for next year’s CSJWEF grants will be open from April 1 through October 31, 2024. The program is open to any non-profit organization, institution, individual, or ad-hoc group working to further wilderness education based in Idaho, Montana, or Iowa. Starting in 2024, grants will be awarded up to \$2,000 per year. More information can be found at <https://www.selwaybitterroot.org/csjwef-grant>.

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The Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation is a community of wilderness-minded and hardworking individuals dedicated to bringing citizens and youth to wilderness to work, live, and play. Since 2006, SBFC has helped steward the 4-million-acre Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, across Idaho and Montana. Visit SBFC online at www.selwaybitterroot.org.