



## A Letter to Members From Our President

Dear Friends and Fellow Society Members,

2012 is a special year marking the 40th anniversary of the Sawtooth National Recreation Area's creation and 15th anniversary of the Society's founding. Since inception, the Society has served as the Sawtooth NRA's primary public advocate:

- Working with state and federal policy makers on issues critical to the Sawtooth NRA;
- Helping negotiate and fund conservation easements protecting open lands and scenic vistas;
- Investing over \$600,000 in 150 recreational-related projects and programs; and
- Sponsoring and conducting educational programs reaching over 2,000 people yearly.

But even as we celebrate these milestones and achievements, serious challenges remain. Growing visitor numbers and increasingly diverse recreational activities are testing the area's capacity; property sales are inviting increased development; and state and federal agency funding cuts are significantly eroding area management resources. Absent greater private sector involvement, meeting these challenges will be very difficult.

In response, over the last year the Sawtooth Society leadership has carefully considered these challenges and its own future. We spent considerable time reflecting on what the future vision of the organization should be and how best to position the Society to continue

to play a positive role over the next decade. As a result of that review and numerous rich discussions, the Society recently took three important steps that I am excited to share with you. To more crisply and strategically focus Society activities, the Board adopted the following as the Society's future vision:

- Being an objective, credible provider of stewardship education with respect to the unique qualities and resources of the Sawtooth NRA;
- Being the most effective regional and national advocate for the Sawtooth NRA and public policies that affect it; and
- Having a diverse and growing base of ongoing and long-term funding and member/partner collaborations to achieve its mission.

To fulfill this role, we are embarking on a major multi-year outreach effort, combining traditional techniques and new social networking technology, designed to engage and educate 10,000 or more annually on Sawtooth NRA values and opportunities to help ensure this special place remains so. These are people who can be educated and recruited as volunteers for key projects, resource providers, and public advocates on Sawtooth NRA issues. As a part of this new initiative, the Board sanctioned an aggressive pursuit of the financial and other support needed for this effort.

I'm pleased to report that several Board members, as well as others, have committed significant financial and direct in-kind work to support the effort. A Communications Committee of the Board has developed a strategic

communications plan and design work has begun on a new, interactive website, coupled with appropriate social networking tools and updated collateral marketing materials. A planned series of annual volunteer projects and educational forums will further engage and educate present and potential Society members. In addition, grant applications are pending with several institutional donor prospects to secure the necessary incremental resources to fully implement this work.

This is truly an ambitious undertaking! But in light of the challenges ahead, it is one we deem essential for continued protection of this place we all cherish. Commenting on national parks featured in his recent film series, Ken Burns said (with paraphrase): "Places like the Sawtooth NRA perform a kind of open-heart surgery on us, permitting us more room in our hearts for love of these places, for love of our country, for love of our family. We are all co-owners of these most moving places on Earth, and while much of our emotion is born in the spectacular scenery we are seeing there, it also finds its source in us and our love and connection to each other. It's a pretty amazing bargain, this Sawtooth NRA. As co-owners all we have to do is to use it wisely, make sure it is being preserved carefully, and pass it safely on to our posterity."

With your continued and growing support, the Society aims to help all of us do just that! Thank you for the privilege of helping lead this exciting work!

Paul Hill, President



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The Sawtooth Society is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that was established in 1997 to protect the Sawtooth National recreation Area

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# Sagebrush Soiree - Help Us Celebrate!

Bigger and better than ever, the 2012 Sagebrush Soiree is quickly approaching. Come and be a part of this dinner and auction, which will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Sawtooth NRA and the 15th anniversary of the Sawtooth Society on July 28th at Drew and Linda Lawler's lovely Sawtooth Valley Ranch.

Apart from being the primary fundraiser for the Sawtooth Society, it is a tremendously fun evening with an elegant dinner, incredible views, an opportunity to make new friends, reacquaint with former colleagues and neighbors, and the perfect time to invite others to learn about the Society's efforts in protecting and preserving the Sawtooth NRA we all love. As space is limited, get your tickets now by calling 208.721.2909.



It took many to create the Sawtooth NRA and to form the Sawtooth Society; help us celebrate our accomplishments, and those who made it happen, at the Soiree on July 28th.

boating on Redfish Lake and several rafting experiences including the Middle Fork of the Salmon, main Salmon and the Lochsa rivers.

- Golfing, skeet shooting and goose hunting
- "Secrets of the snow" adventure, a sheep wagon stay and a family/children hot springs party
- Fishing trips in the Copper Basin, canoeing on Silver Creek
- Custom oil paintings and Sawtooth NRA photos
- One-of-a-kind salmon-themed art vessel, a Sawtooth celebration necklace, and hand-painted Sawtooth scarf
- Western gear and memorabilia
- Fun history lessons of days gone by
- Professional services including estate planning and habitat restoration
- Aerial tour of Central Idaho
- An evening with Bethine Church!

Thank you, Drew and Linda for hosting the Soiree and thank you to all those who have donated auction items and in-kind support to make this year's Soiree a successful event! If you cannot attend, but would like to receive the final gift list to place an absentee bid please let us know.



A gourmet meal, live band, good friends and a great view of the Sawtooths - don't miss out on the gala event of the year!

## Join the fun – Volunteer!

One of our new focus areas is to form an active volunteer program that works to accomplish key projects to help enhance the varied recreation in the Sawtooth NRA. As such, we are building a program to ensure we are focused on strategic priorities.

We could use your help if you are interested in supporting this effort. If you have a group – be it family, friends, corporation, school, church or non-profit – please give us a call or drop us an email. We promise to make the experience a true “win/win” as you give back to the area you love by helping to address important needs.



The “Jersey Boys” traveled across the country to decommission old hitching posts, build new ones and refurbish feeding troughs at several trailheads.



This intrepid Retired Smokejumper Crew has made it an annual tradition to accomplish projects in the Sawtooth NRA. Photo by Bill Yensen.

## These are Busy Times at the Society

With the rolling out of our initiatives to enhance outreach to youth, increase our work with volunteers and to establish partnerships to increase our reach, there is a significant amount of fresh and exciting activity underway, including:

- Revamping our website to appeal to a broader audience and to become interactive and employ social media tools.
- Planning important volunteer efforts for this year and building a strategic plan to dramatically increase the number of these projects going forward.
- Designing and printing of a stunning, new Sawtooth Society brochure and related material to position the Society with potential new members.
- Implementing a “dollar-a-day” program with the Idaho Rocky Mountain Ranch, Redfish Lake Lodge and the High Country Inn to increase our visibility and membership with visitors to the area.
- Enhancing our presence by linking with 40th anniversary articles and the new hiking guide of the Sawtooth’s by Matt Leidecker.
- Reaching out to foundations that support organizations similar to the Society and submitting applications for grants to implement our work.

We have also been very busy on our more traditional work, including:

- Building partnerships with other non-profits who share similar goals to leverage our work, including the Trust for Public Lands, Nature Conservancy, Conservation Fund and the Bill Lane Center at Stanford University.
- Meeting with the Idaho congressional delegation, key congressional committee staff and agency leadership to discuss our policy priorities.
- Striving to obtain the remaining necessary funding for the Rodeo Grounds conservation easement.
- Garnering support for the Stanley to Redfish Lake Trail.
- Rebuilding awareness and support for the exchange of state-owned parcels in the Sawtooth NRA necessitated by the transition of key state and federal agency personnel who have recently retired.
- Establishing support for donor recognition where the Society provides grants to enhance recreation.
- Participating in the development of an Idaho Public Television special celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Sawtooth NRA.
- Seeking private funding to conserve key wetland parcels.
- Encouraging private landowners and the U.S. Forest Service to find “win/win” solutions to long-standing issues to both protect Sawtooth NRA values and private property rights.
- Managing the “goat” license plate funding and working to complete a long-term renewal for our partnership with the State of Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.
- Exploring new ways to partner with government agencies to accomplish more work on the ground.
- And planning a world-class party for July 28th – the Sagebrush Soiree!



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## Share a Memory

As we update our website we want to regularly share stories and photos of special memories of the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. Whether it was a fond experience growing up, a special tradition with grandkids, a spectacular or unusual photo, or just another day in paradise, please share it with others by forwarding it to Gary O'Malley at [gary@sawtoothsociety.org](mailto:gary@sawtoothsociety.org).



Memories are made everyday in the Sawtooth's. Here Ella Paul, enjoys an early morning of fishing on Stanley Lake in the mid-1960's.

## Sawtooth Society Grants Continue to Benefit Stanley and the Sawtooth NRA

The Sawtooth Society continues to invest in the Sawtooth NRA's recreational experiences and with these recent grants has now approved nearly 150 grants within the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. The vast majority of these grants have been made possible by the proceeds from the popular mountain goat license plate. Over the last six months the Sawtooth Society has approved the following grants:

- Scenic Byway signage at Sawtooth NRA entrance portals
- Improved trailhead signs at various locations in the Sawtooth NRA
- Wilderness invasive weed treatment at campsites and along trails
- Pioneer Park playground equipment for families, visitors and residents alike
- National Smokejumper volunteer projects, including fencing
- Two AmeriCorps volunteers to help with interpretive programs, including those at the Redfish Visitors Center

If you know about projects that might enhance the recreation in the Sawtooth NRA please contact the Society.

**Check your plates! If it isn't a goat, it isn't giving to fund the important ongoing work of the Sawtooth Society. When you "Get a Goat", you "Give a Gift"!**



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## Vision 20/20 Community Update

On June 4th the Sawtooth Society helped sponsor a Community Update and dinner in Stanley on the Sawtooth Vision 20/20 program, with over 60 people attending. Sawtooth Vision 20/20 is a long-term strategic plan to help identify risks to Sawtooth NRA and put in place collaborative strategies to address these risks and other opportunities.

The program provided an update on a wide range of items including: the Pole Creek Off Highway Vehicle Project which is expected to be completed this year, the proposed substantial expansion of summer trails in the Galena Summit area, planning underway for the Stanley to Redfish Lake trail, new portal entrances for the Sawtooth NRA, the new website work for the Sawtooth NRA and updates on the wolverine study and the geothermal study for Stanley. Best of all, the formal program was followed by a potluck dinner which further enabled conversations among the many groups directly engaged in Sawtooth Vision 20/20.

The steering committee will continue to meet throughout the coming months to ensure progress against goals is maintained and to plan for a thorough stakeholder review of this work in 2013.