

Preserve • Protect • Enhance
SAWTOOTH



SOCIETY ADVOCATE



PLEASE JOIN US JULY 30TH FOR THE SAWTOOTH SOCIETY'S ANNUAL SAGEBRUSH SOIREE

Reserve your tickets now by calling 208.721.2909. Some have attended every summer and plan their summer calendar around this important gathering. Still other members have yet to experience this remarkable and unique evening where those who care about the SNRA gather for the most significant event of the year! Apart from being the primary fundraiser for the Sawtooth Society, it is a tremendously fun evening with an opportunity to make new friends, acquaint with former colleagues and neighbors, and invite others to learn about the Society's efforts in protecting and preserving the SNRA we all love.

The final planning by the large contingent needed to pull off an event of this scale in the SNRA is now nearing completion. Quite literally as soon as last year's party was completed the team commenced planning for the 2011 version. We cannot say enough about how appreciative we are of our members and Board in their tireless work to try and set the bar higher each year. The result of this work will be on full display at Sagebrush Soiree 2011 on Saturday, July 30th. Jim and Mary Mitchell are hosting the event at their lovely Shaw Mesa home above Fisher Creek. Thank you Jim and Mary!

We will have a silent auction during the cocktail hour, which will offer

an expanded selection of gifts, with the highly anticipated live auction immediately following dinner. Joe Hutchins will be back to provide his professional auctioneering and guide us through the wide variety of items, in all price ranges, that have been donated by our generous donors. To whet your appetite, this year we have over 40 items, including: a variety of outdoor-related experiences you cannot replicate on your own, a Middle Fork trip by Solitude River Trips, varied and unique wine packages with one including a Napa Valley trip, get-away packages to Malibu CA and western Washington, a private and behind the scenes Shakespeare package in Ashland, fishing and hunting experiences, Sawtooth-based artwork, experiences highlighting the unique history and qualities of the SNRA, and so much more! We will even auction off the

permanent rights to a buoy at Redfish Lake!

Dust off your old cowboy boots and bring your hat along as we celebrate the historic cowboys and cowgirls who called the SNRA home. It's an evening of unforgettable fun, new and old friends, country music, an elegant dinner, incredible scenic views of the Salmon River and mountains and an opportunity to bid on gifts not found anywhere else.

As space is limited, please don't wait to buy your ticket; you do not want to miss this event! Call the Sawtooth Society at 208.721.2909 and encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same. If you cannot make it to the festivities this year, but would like to receive the final gift list to place an absentee bid or make a donation, please let us know.



You too can have a thrill, come to the Sagebrush Soiree on July 30!



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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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A Letter to Members from Our President

Dear Friends and Fellow Members,

Reading or listening to today's news, one cannot help but feel impressed, indeed overwhelmed, by the ever-accelerating pace of change. A pace that, sadly, seems to foster ever-greater stresses and strains on our relationships and ourselves as individuals. It is no surprise that medical researchers confirm the increased importance of periodically taking time out from everyday routines to reconnect with our natural world. In fact, for hundreds of years serious observers of the human condition have recognized this fundamental need to spend time with nature. From Shakespeare to Sondheim, writers have sent their characters into the woods to discover or rediscover their human values and proper perspective on the world.

The vital role of natural sanctuaries affording wild and unspoiled experiences in addressing this need was recently noted by one long-time member of the Society Board when he eloquently described the healing powers of the Sawtooth NRA; those qualities which nurture our ability to relate positively with each other and our world. When one surveys mountain peaks from the top of Elephant's Perch, looks across blue lakes of Camas off Highway 21, or studies tundra swans on an autumn day at Stanley Lake, he cannot fail to feel more in touch with himself and his surrounds.

The recent reopening of gravel mining in the Sawtooth Valley is a stark reminder, however, that without protection the adverse impacts of development pressures inevitably will diminish and degrade the qualities that make these sanctuaries so vital to our well being. So, as scholars and scientists advance our knowledge in technology, medicine and other fields, we must remember to protect these special places that insure

our humanity and continue to feed our souls. For in reality, protecting, preserving and enhancing sanctuaries like the Sawtooth NRA is protecting ourselves. From this perspective, such work becomes a special mission to protect, preserve and enhance our fundamental humanity.

Fulfilling this mission is why the Sawtooth Society exists. This is who we are; this is what we do! One need only review our record to confirm the positive benefits of our efforts. And with deficit forced budget cuts on all conservation funding from governmental sources, work like ours becomes increasingly critical. As the Society's most important advocates, I hope all of our members will share this message when friends ask "What is the Sawtooth Society?" and "What does it do?". By protecting, preserving and enhancing the Sawtooth experience, we help protect the collective humanity of all. I ask you to encourage them to look at our record and join our work. Of course, from now until July 31 is a particularly opportune time to share this message, since any new or incremental membership donations carry twice the impact as a result of our current matching challenge grant campaign.

I hope you share my pride and passion about what we've accomplished together since 1997. With your continued support, particularly in growing our membership and volunteer bases, we will continue to provide opportunities each year for thousands of families and individuals to "go into the woods" for nurturing, restoration and insight into the world around us. I am, as always, most grateful for your continued support and honored to serve as your President. Thank you for all you do!

Paul D. Hill, President

Industrial Mining Commences Once Again in the SNRA

As you may recall, an ongoing major concern for many involved in protecting the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) is the ultimate fate for four parcels of state-owned land within it. Because they are state-owned, these parcels are exempt from the protective federal law and rules restricting land development and uses within the SNRA. Unlike other land which must be managed to protect scenic, historic, wildlife and recreation values, use of these parcels is governed solely by state law requiring the State to manage them to generate funds, including funds for the education system. As a result, any or all of these parcels are subject to potential development, mining, and other use, which may be inconsistent with the very values for which the SNRA was created.

A few years ago this inherent conflict between preservation of the values of the SNRA and the management mandate on state-owned parcels came to the surface when the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) began open-pit gravel mining on a state-owned parcel just east of Highway 75 near the Fourth of July Creek Road. The heavy machinery, brilliant lights, and large gravel piles were very visible from Highway 75 and, obviously, significantly impacted the area's scenic beauty, nearby wildlife, and air and noise quality for both residents and visitors alike.

The Society promptly advised the State of its concerns over these impacts and the mining operation did cease after one season. However, with the immediate need to resurface area roads, ITD has once again initiated operations. The risk of continued mining well into the future remains since ITD holds a long-term lease from the State for substantial amounts of high quality gravel on this parcel.

Because of the adverse impact intensive development, mining or other uses of these parcels have on the SNRA, the Society has worked with the State, the Forest Service and others to find an equitable way to ultimately bring them

under the protection of the SNRA law and rules for land use. In fact, bringing these parcels under such protection is one of the highest priority action plans identified in Sawtooth Vision 20/20 (the long range plan for protecting the SNRA). The task, however, has proven very difficult because, apart from possible changes in the law, the only visible means to accomplish this objective appears to be either multi-million dollar purchases of the parcels from the State or a land exchange between the Forest Service (or BLM) and the State.

Those of you familiar with governmental land exchanges know that exchange transactions usually span years, are quite complex and expensive, involving not only identification of suitable lands for exchange, but difficult land appraisals, environmental studies and numerous other lengthy processes. On top of these normal land exchange hurdles, the long-term ITD lease further complicates the situation, as does the legitimate gravel need for the area's roads. The need to find alternative public or private gravel sources, which are suitable in both quantity and quality and in close proximity, make an exchange here even more difficult. To-date the efforts to find acceptable alternative sources of gravel have been fruitless.

Several years ago, a potential exchange involving Forest Service land adjacent to the Tamarack Development near

McCall appeared promising; that is until Tamarack went into bankruptcy. Since then, despite continuing efforts by the Society, the Forest Service and the State, no acceptable solution has yet to be found. Nevertheless, all parties are continuing to explore all alternatives in the hope that a solution can be found.

When the Society learned that ITD had decided to recommence mining on the Fourth of July parcel this summer to resurface Highway 75 between Smiley Creek and Stanley, we worked with ITD to try to minimize the adverse impacts as much as possible. However, given the long-term lease that is in place and the legitimate need for gravel for public purposes, there is only so much that can be done in the short-term. This most recent development re-emphasizes the need to find a permanent solution to this issue. Without an answer, not only will further mining activity take place, but it is quite possible other, more extreme, activities could occur, further adversely affecting the SNRA.

Unfortunately, finding a solution is very time consuming and expensive, may involve attorneys, engineers, appraisers and other outside consultants in addition to the Society, State and Forest Service. Finding an acceptable way through this conundrum will remain one of the highest priorities for the Sawtooth Society for the foreseeable future.

A New Look for Sawtooth Society

Undoubtedly, many of you noticed a change over the last year as we began to move from our long-standing logo featuring a characterization of the Sawtooth's to a fresh new look. While the original logo served us well, we have received feedback over the last several years that it was time to soften and modernize our look. Fortunately, we had just the person on our Board to help with that endeavor, Elizabeth Hendrix, owner of Steelhead Design Communications in Ketchum. Over the last several months, Elizabeth produced a number of creative alternatives, and after focus group testing them with some of our members, the decision was made to adopt the new mountain goat-based version that you see in this newsletter and you will now start to see it used extensively in our suite of communication materials. We hope you like it and will pass along a hearty thank you to Elizabeth for her efforts.





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yourself - "Get and
Give" a goat to help
fund important projects
in the SNRA!**



In the Next Edition of Advocate:

Learn about the many and varied successes of Sawtooth Vision 20/20 and its important work to protect the SNRA.

Recent Sawtooth Society Grants Enrich the SNRA

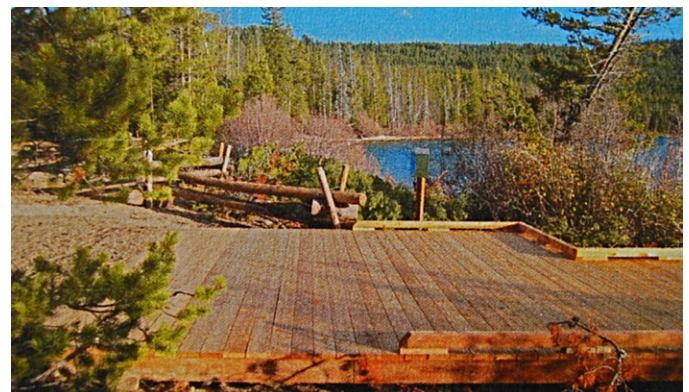
The Sawtooth Society has now approved well over 130 grants to enhance the recreational experience in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. This partnership with the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation is made possible by the proceeds from the very popular mountain goat license plate. In just the last 6 months grants have included:

- National Smokejumper Association volunteer support for trail-related work
- AmeriCorps Volunteer at Redfish Visitors Center
- 25 miles of trail maintenance in the Sawtooths
- Trailhead information boards
- Alturas Ski trail signage
- Galena phone repeater patch for enhanced safety
- Snowshoe adventure program for children
- Enhancements to Redfish Visitors Center
- Greater access and improvements to Grandjean area hot springs

If you know about projects that might enhance the recreation in the SNRA please contact Gary O'Malley at gary@sawtoothsociety.org.



Board members Keith Reese and Paul Hill join with Brent Snider, Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game, to consider possible projects for future Sawtooth Society grants.



Sawtooth Society grant beneficiaries include those enjoying the new Alturas Lake viewing platform