



Winter 2017

Annual President's Letter



I am excited to report that as we close out our 20th year, this past summer saw the completion of the most successful season of Volunteer/Stewardship efforts in the Sawtooth Society's history. We are proud of our growing partnership with the Forest Service and also proud of the fact that as the only non-profit organization dedicated strictly to the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (NRA) we remain the primary organization for providing volunteers (and funding) for protecting, preserving, and enhancing the Sawtooth NRA.

Anchored by the Austin Kraal Memorial Volunteer program geared to provide urban and at-risk youth the opportunity to experience the great outdoors in the form of the Sawtooth NRA and supplemented by our partnership with various other groups, the Sawtooth Society provided positive enhancement of the landscape to help protect and preserve the area while improving the quality of the Sawtooth NRA experience for both residents and visitors alike.

We view our partnership with the Forest Service in this area an important milestone on which to build and believe that this partnership is absolutely critical to ensuring that the Sawtooth NRA remains a great place to visit and live for decades to come. We look forward to making an even bigger impact on the area in 2018!

With the new year, we will begin a new phase in the life of the Sawtooth Society. It is with sadness that I report that after 9-years, Gary O'Malley has decided to step down as Executive Director at the end of 2017 with plans to spend more time enjoying this beautiful place in which we live. Gary has been pivotal in the growth of the Society since his arrival and has worked tirelessly on the Society's behalf. Gary will be remaining in the area and has agreed to continue to work with the Sawtooth Society to spearhead the major effort of putting together the Sagebrush Soiree.

The Executive Director is the face of the Society to the Forest Service, to the public, to our donors, and to the other organizations that assist us in our mission. Recognizing the importance of this position to our success, we have put together a Search Committee comprised of Board members to identify and hire a new Executive Director as quickly as possible.

Please join me in thanking Gary for his tireless dedication, leadership and commitment in bringing the Sawtooth Society to where it is today. We appreciate Gary's willingness to take on the responsibility of the Soiree in the coming year and perhaps beyond. I want to assure our various constituents that we will continue to further our mission to protect, preserve, and enhance the Sawtooth NRA during this transition period and look forward to bigger and better things in the years to come.

Finally, 2017 saw the passing of two icons who were instrumental in the establishment of both the Sawtooth NRA and the Sawtooth Society with the deaths of Orval Hansen and Cecil Andrus. Cecil Andrus adopted a platform against the threatened mining of Castle Peak as the foundation of his first successful Idaho gubernatorial campaign and is largely credited with providing impetus for Congress to create the Sawtooth NRA by raising awareness of the dangers to the area. Orval Hansen was a long running Idaho congressman who, along with Jim McClure, sponsored Public Law 92-400, which in 1972 established the Sawtooth NRA and the Sawtooth Wilderness. Both of these individuals served on the board of the Sawtooth Society and worked tirelessly to protect this beautiful area. We remain thankful for their efforts.

Here's to the continued success of the Sawtooth Society in 2018 and beyond and I'd like to say a heartfelt THANK YOU to all who continue to support our mission.

Wayne Hughes
President, Sawtooth Society

Volunteer Program

Summary of the 2017 Stewardship Program

For the 2017 summer season, the Sawtooth Society's Austin Kraal Memorial Volunteer Stewardship Program conducted 31 maintenance and construction projects with 277 volunteers providing over 2,900 hours of labor on key projects within the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (NRA). The groups often included urban and at-risk youth to assist with projects on-the-ground, building self-esteem and an understanding of nature, while trading technology for the traditional tools necessary in Wilderness Areas.

Enabled by your donations and support, these outcomes more than doubled the efforts of past seasons. Groups participating in this year's trail maintenance, highway and campsite cleanup as well as log fence construction for sensitive areas included: The College of Idaho, the Limelight Hotel Ketchum, Boise Young Professionals members, Cherry Gulch School, Sawtooth Brewery, blueFire Wilderness Therapy, Flourish Foundation and Sage School. On single-day and multi-day backpack trips, volunteers used crosscut saws, axes, pruners and shovels to safely clear Wilderness and non-Wilderness trails as well as improve drainage while practicing Leave No Trace hiking and camping principles. It was the first summer the Society led backpacking trail maintenance trips, which were highly successful and the plan is to continue and expand this portion of its work in the future.

"The Forest Service very much appreciates the work of the Sawtooth Society and all

the volunteer groups who participated with them to work on the Sawtooth NRA," said Sawtooth NRA Area Ranger Kirk Flannigan. "As federal budgets continue to be reduced and stretched among many priorities, volunteers are essential to accomplish critical work including maintaining trails and recreational facilities. The Society's success in helping to address this need helps enable all our visitors to have an enjoyable and safe recreational experience in this iconic area."

For Stewardship Coordinator Greg Travelstead, "It was truly an honor to work with so many dedicated volunteers, especially to witness the side effects of strenuous manual labor on the youth participants. There is so little opportunity for youth to engage in such rigorous activity in our modern times. The self-esteem and camaraderie that result from shared work was evident in every group. Anytime we have important work accomplished and bring volunteers to the area, it helps to build the next generation of advocates for the Sawtooth NRA and directly enables the Society to work toward our goal to preserve, protect and enhance the Sawtooth NRA."

According to Kathy Rex, Executive Director and Co-founder of blueFire Wilderness Therapy, "We truly appreciate the opportunity to be able to partner with the Sawtooth Society this past summer and contribute a significant number of total hours of service work. In our work to teach teens the importance and value of being responsible

stewards of the land and strong teammates, we also were fortunate to provide this life changing experience in such a remarkably beautiful setting."

Outdoor Program Director of blueFire, Danial Rothman added, "The weeks we spent working with the Sawtooth Society were some of most rewarding service weeks blueFire had this past summer. Our similar missions to help young people overlapped well in the Wilderness. The work to maintain trails consistently resulted in clients motivating and working well together. We very much look forward to partnering again next summer."

College junior Natasha Dacic, summarized her four days of project work in May in saying, "Helping the Sawtooth Society complete trail work was nothing short of amazing. Spending a week up in the Sawtooth NRA with The College of Idaho Outdoor Program was a great introduction to what the Sawtooth Society does for the area. From learning the how-tos of trail maintenance to being outside in the Sawtooths, this trip sparked an interest in continuing to volunteer for the Sawtooth Society".

In addition to the completion of 67 miles of trail maintenance the Society completed two highway cleanups along two sections of adopted highways, one near Alturas Lake Turnoff on Highway 75, and the other west of the Stanley Transfer Station turnoff on Highway 21. Volunteers also reconstructed two sections of the iconic log worm fence lost to

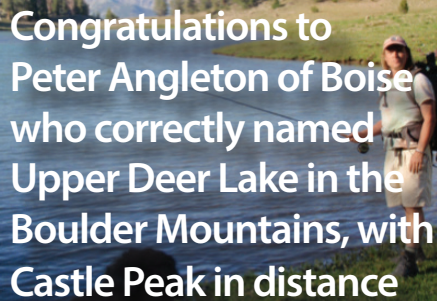
Continued on Page 3



An enthusiastic group — The Boise Young Professionals head out to clear and maintain trail



Dave Duhaime planning the cuts for the most challenging trail obstruction of the season along the Alpine Way trail



Congratulations to Peter Angleton of Boise who correctly named Upper Deer Lake in the Boulder Mountains, with Castle Peak in distance

CAN YOU NAME THIS LOCATION IN THE SAWTOOTH NRA?

MYSTERY PHOTO CONTEST >

If so, give us a call at 208.721.2909 or send us an email at gary@sawtoothsociety.org. The first person to correctly identify this location wins a nifty prize!



Continued From Page 2 - Volunteer Program

the Dry Creek wildfire in the 2016 season, using rails recycled from the enclosure surrounding the historic Pole Creek Ranger Station.

Two Society members in particular deserve special mention for their efforts over multiple work days. Dave Duhaime from Twin Falls brought both experience and valuable tree-climbing skills to some complex logging problems. Debra Shiraishi Pratt of Iron Creek not only volunteered on numerous days, but also attended our three-day Stewardship Training in June, where she became USFS certified to operate crosscut saws on federal lands.

The Society is also indebted to Cliff Bar for fueling the volunteers with bars and energy blocks

all season, courtesy of their local rep Courtney Hamilton.

The Society's Summer Project Leader Autumn Lear tirelessly led trip after trip into the Wilderness areas for remote trail maintenance. Autumn had previously worked many seasons on Wilderness trails for the USFS. That first-hand experience was invaluable and she helped teach the safe use of tools and safe body movement, which was a key component of our injury-free record in 2017.

To learn more about the Sawtooth Society's volunteer program, suggest a 2018 project or volunteer as an individual or organization email Greg Travelstead at greg@sawtoothsociety.org.



The finished product — a new log fence protects the sensitive Park Creek area which was impacted by the Dry Creek Fire in 2016

POLICY UPDATES

At any one time there are a number of policy-related issues important to the Sawtooth NRA. Currently, the Society is engaged in the following issues:

WILDERNESS PLANNING – The required management planning for the two new Wilderness Areas in the Sawtooth NRA is ongoing and the public comment period for the draft management plan has concluded. The agencies are currently reviewing the comments it received and unless there are legal challenges are expected to prepare final plans next summer. Four public meetings were held as a part of the public comment process in November to address questions from participants.

STANLEY TO REDFISH TRAIL – The decade long effort to establish a trail between Stanley and Redfish Lake is coming to fruition. A final agreement and decision is in place, funding has been secured and construction could start as early as next summer.

FIRE COLLABORATIVE – The Sawtooth Valley Wildland Fire Collaborative continues to work with the Forest Service, communities and stakeholders to help identify and implement steps of a scale to mitigate the danger of another catastrophic wildfire in the Sawtooth Valley. Two proposed projects, which will include prescribed fire in the fall, are north and west of Stanley near Highway 21 and

are slated to begin in 2018. Everyone is encouraged to participate in the public meetings to learn more about the projects and timelines.

DARK SKY RESERVE – An application has been filed to make a portion of the Sawtooth NRA a Dark Sky Reserve under the International Dark Sky Association based in Tucson, Arizona. The effort has been led by the City of Stanley, Blaine County and the City of Ketchum and a decision by the Association is expected by the end of the year. The stated desire is to promote these skies as being among the darkest in the country. The Association has no regulatory powers, those are governed by the cities and counties.

PRIVATE LANDS PROGRAM – An effective Private Lands Program is a critical element of Public Law 92-400 that created the Sawtooth NRA. A new tool to help landowners has been completed and will be printed and distributed to landowners soon. Included in the booklet are the findings, based on 45-years of experience, as to what works best to ensure inconspicuous development. This is a product of a multi-year joint project between the Forest Service and the Sawtooth Society to document design characteristics and other variables that can play a major role to ensure structures don't dominate the view and detract from the area's immense natural beauty.



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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"!



BECOME INVOLVED IN A STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

Get some exercise. Give back to the Sawtooth NRA. Learn more about joining or sponsoring a Volunteer Stewardship Project by contacting greg@sawtoothsociety.org or calling 208.721.7665.

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