



HISTORY AND MISSION

The Sawtooth Society (the “Society”) was founded in 1997 as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation to preserve, protect and enhance the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) by a non-partisan group of dedicated supporters. Founders included Bethine Church (the Society’s first President and widow of U.S. Senator Frank Church), U.S. Senator Jim McClure, Congressman Orval Hansen (Senators Church and McClure and Rep. Hansen were key partners in passage of the SNRA legislation), Governor Cecil Andrus (Governor at time of passage of the SNRA legislation and later U.S. Secretary of the Interior), and Bob Hayes (the first Executive Director of the Society).

FOUNDING VISION

The founders’ vision was an organization that would work in concert with, but independently of, the U.S. Forest Service staff responsible for management of the public lands encompassed in the SNRA as well as enforcement of the special rules and regulations associated with the area’s unique NRA designation. The Society would also work cooperatively with other environmental and recreational groups in the area as well as state and local governments and governmental agencies, private businesses, and individual property owners. Its mission would be focused exclusively on preserving, protecting, and enhancing the special qualities that make the SNRA one of the most physically magnificent and highly cherished natural areas of the entire U.S.

At the time of the Society’s founding a major threat had arisen in the form of a highly visible and unapproved 160-acre subdivision in the Stanley Basin. The Society, in its first years, negotiated an end to the controversial subdivision, mobilized policymakers and successfully urged Congress to appropriate \$17 million to the Forest Service for the purchase of conservation easements on thirteen properties, and for purchase of other properties, protecting this land in perpetuity. In 2005, in recognition of our work on behalf of the area, the Sawtooth Society, along with the Sawtooth National Forest, received the coveted *Chief of the Forest Service Partnership Award*. Since its inception, the Society has helped negotiate and secure funding for additional easements, has funded a wide range of conservation and recreation facilities and programs throughout the SNRA, and has led the effort to develop and implement a comprehensive long-term strategy to guide the economic, cultural and environmental future of the area.

PURPOSES

The Sawtooth Society’s purposes include:

1. To preserve and protect the natural, scenic, historic, pastoral, fish, and wildlife values of the SNRA.



2. To preserve and enhance the recreational values of the SNRA.
3. To preserve and enhance recreational, educational, interpretive, scientific, research, and experimental opportunities on the SNRA.
4. To increase public awareness, understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the SNRA, and to enhance public support for the preservation of these values listed above.
5. To raise, manage, and administer such funds as are necessary and appropriate to carry out the purposes of the Corporation.

We accomplish these purposes by supporting and promoting conservation, recreation, education, and advocacy.

The Society responds to threats against the SNRA and the values for which it was formed with strong protective efforts and advocacy. We work in close partnership with the Forest Service, other agencies, state and county governments, non-profits, recreation groups, and local businesses and individuals to preserve and protect the SNRA.