From the BOARD CHAIR

Spring is an exciting time of year at the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation. Over the past three months we have successfully conducted community events across Montana and Idaho. We thank all those who attended in spite of the relentless winter weather!

The Telluride Film Festivals in Missoula and McCall; our Annual Fundraiser in Clarkston with silent/live auctions plus a guest speaker; book signing events in Moscow and Boise; the Salmon River Grand Raffle—donated by ROW Adventures; Pint Nights in Missoula; and other events co-sponsored with conservation groups helped tell our story and raise much-needed funds.

Amidst all that, with a staff of 2.5, we have interviewed and hired a great team of ten college student interns and six trail crew leaders for this coming summer season.

In this busy spring season your Board of Directors are also well aware that we still face challenges. We take pride in our non-political position, nevertheless, we are affected by national politics and the uncertainty of federal funding sources. We truly appreciate the support we receive from our members, donors, and business sponsors. As this administration continues to focus on health care and military spending we encourage everyone to dig a little deeper to ensure that the progress we’ve made is not wasted or, quite literally, eroded or obliterated.

Simple things like renewing or upgrading your membership, purchasing an Idaho Wilderness license plate, joining or supporting a volunteer work party, contributing to our Warren Miller scholarship fund, or donating through our web page would be appreciated tremendously! For over ten seasons we have made a difference in peoples’ lives while providing hands-on stewardship for the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness areas. With your continued support, we look forward to a great 2017 summer season and beyond.

Ed Krumpe
Board Chairman

From the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am very excited about our 2017 season. In cooperation with our Forest Service partners, we are offering ten terrific, multiple-day wilderness volunteer projects in the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness areas. We are excited to announce that we will be onboarding ten Wilderness Ranger Interns. These interns come to us from University of Idaho, University of Montana and eight other US colleges. We’ve also hired 6 skilled, professional staff members who will help train our Wilderness Interns and lead the volunteer/intern projects.

I’m happy welcome Courtney Wall to SBFC. Courtney joined the team in February as the Program Director. She has experience working with FS partners, managing volunteer crews/projects, and knowledge and training working in the Wilderness environment. Courtney hit the ground running and is looking forward to meeting and working with you!

Warmest thanks to the SBFC “Wild Women” Jane, Diane, Sarah, and Connie. Once again they outdid themselves putting on another fabulous and successful fundraiser in Clarkston.

When you register for a volunteer project this season, you’ll notice we have made two improvements/adaptations to the registration process.

We’ve implemented a project difficulty rating system. We hope this will be a helpful tool for determining the right project fit for you. Of course, if you have any questions, please give us a call or email—we will answer any questions you may have. To learn more and sign up: www.selwaybitterroot.org/getinvolved/

We have added a $60 FULLY REFUNDABLE deposit to the volunteer registration process. The deposit is intended to cover SBFC expenditures for food items and time spent carefully planning and shopping. We simply need to cover our costs for short-notice cancellations or “no shows”. We would hope you can understand our position and can see the compelling reason for this decision. The DEPOSIT IS FULLY REFUNDABLE at the end of each project or if a cancellation is made two weeks (or more) prior to the project date. I am happy to discuss this change with you. You can contact me via email or phone: sferguson@selwaybitterroot.org or 208-871-1906.

We look forward to hitting the trail with you! Let the season begin!

Sally Ferguson
Executive Director

The Wildest Place is the membership newsletter of the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation. With the support of members, local businesses, and generous grantors, the SBFC is committed to connecting citizens and communities to assist in the stewardship of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, and surrounding wildlands.

EDITING: Sue Webster
DESIGN & LAYOUT: Beth A. Case
CONTRIBUTORS: Sally Ferguson & Courtney Wall
COVER PHOTO: Boulder Point, PHOTOGRAPHER: Aaron Theisen

The Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

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Welcome Courtney Wall – SBFC Program Director

Join us in welcoming Courtney Wall to SBFC as the Program Director. Courtney’s responsibilities include oversight and leadership for SBFC programs and staff in the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church Wilderness and wildland areas.

Courtney joined SBFC in 2016 as the Bitterroot Lead Wilderness Steward where she lead volunteer trips and managed three Wilderness Ranger Interns. She also worked on the Nez Perce-Clearwater NF as a SBFC trail crew member.

Courtney grew up in Connecticut but has made Montana her home for several years. She graduated from University of New Hampshire with a degree in Psychology and a minor in Environmental Conservation. As part of her course work, she spent time in New Zealand backpacking, living in the backcountry and “bagging peaks.”

Before joining SBFC, Courtney worked for Montana Conservation Corps as a crew leader where she gained experience blasting rocks, building crib walls and developing her leadership skills. She then worked for the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation leading volunteer wilderness trips and developing the BMWF Conservation Internship program.

“The Wilderness connection is what keeps me going. It’s primal and creates deep connections with just about anyone.” Courtney considers wilderness work to be a way of life that allows her to advocate for wilderness through the work and not the words.

You can reach Courtney at the SBFC Missoula office, 120 Hickory Street, by email courtneywall@selwaybitterroot.org or 406-880-1927.

Welcome to the Board
Mark Wetherington

Mark is our newest member to the Board. We are so grateful to have Mark join us and bring the Montana perspective to the table. Mark lives in Hamilton, Montana and is a librarian and avid backpacker. Mark grew up in Kentucky and fell in love with wilderness during backpacking trips to the Appalachian Mountains during college. The opportunity to work in a library in a town on the edge of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness was a dream come true and he moved to Hamilton in 2014. He worked seasonally as a visitor services information assistant on the Daniel Boone National Forest and has a Bachelor’s degree in Journalism and a Master’s degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Kentucky. Mark spends as much time as he can exploring the backcountry of Idaho and Montana and is perpetually planning his next wilderness adventure.
WELCOME TO THE 2017 SEASONAL STAFF

We are happy to welcome six wilderness professionals to the SBFC 2017 team. The staff will start May 10 and report for work and training at the Lochsa Historical Ranger Station. Wilderness Ranger Interns will start May 15. Training curriculum will include the basics of wilderness trail maintenance and construction. In addition to trail skills, the staff and Wilderness Ranger Interns will attend a Defensive Horsemanship training day, receive Wilderness First Responder Training, attend a Stock Packing Clinic, and receive training for USFS Saw Certifications. Staff and interns will also learn about the Wilderness Act through the Arthur Carhartt Center and native flora and fauna with the Montana Natural History Center.

Joey Hudek – Moose Creek Trails Liaison
Joey grew up in the suburbs of Chicago. In 2011, he spent a semester in Antarctica doing field research and graduated from the University of Illinois with a bachelor’s degree in Earth and Environmental Sciences. Joey has worked for the conservation corps in Montana, Arizona, and Colorado. He is excited to work with SBFC this season!

William Merritt – Powell Trails Liaison
Originally hailing from Maryland, Will graduated from Ursinus College, outside Philadelphia, with a degree in Biology. In 2013 he moved to Missoula to work for the Montana Conservation Corps. Will has worked for a variety of conservation nonprofits doing trail work and patrolling wilderness areas. Will loves traveling and anything that gets him outside and active.

Kelly O’Neill – Frank Church Lead Wilderness Steward
Kelly was born and raised in the desert city of El Paso, TX. After graduating with a degree in biology, Kelly worked as a member and a leader for Southwest Conservation Corps in Colorado, and has since led crews in Vermont and Utah. Kelly is incredibly excited to be a member of the SBFC team and work in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness!

Connor Adams – Nez Perce-Clearwater Trail Crew Leader
Connor grew up in New York State and cut his backcountry teeth in the Adirondack Mountains. After some time living abroad and then completing a northbound thru hike of the Appalachian Trail, Conner finally moved west to the Rockies. Conner worked for Montana Conservation Corps for two seasons in the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

Trevor Fero – Nez Perce-Clearwater Trail Crew Member
Trevor grew up in Evanston, Illinois. He spent two summers guiding canoe trips in the Boundary Waters of Minnesota for the Boy Scouts and, last season, completed a Conservation Corps internship through the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation.

Meghan Montgomery – Nez Perce-Clearwater Trail Crew Member
Originally from Colorado, Meghan holds degrees in Environmental Science and International Relations from the University of Colorado. She is currently pursuing a Master’s degree at the University of Montana in Resource Conservation. Meghan worked in environmental education as a school garden manager in Bozeman and a naturalist and river guide in Utah. She has worked with the Nature Conservancy in California and with a land trust in North Carolina.
Please join us on one of our 2017 projects. Go to www.selwaybitterroot.org/2017-volunteer-trailwork to apply online for any of the projects listed below.

JUNE 14-20, 2017  
UPPER YELLOWJACKET TRAIL, SALMON-CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST  
Join SBFC staff, Wilderness Interns and USFS staff in the Bighorn Crags area of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. The project is a continuation of the 2014 project: a re-route around a bog that will make the Upper Yellowjacket Trail passable again, with lots of digging! We will meet at the historic Yellowjacket Guard Station and hike about 4 miles to the work-site, then set up camp in a wilderness meadow. Pack support will be provided to carry group gear, food, and tools.  

JULY 1-3, 2017  (PROJECT FULL-WAIT LIST ONLY)  
ST. MARY’S PEAK TRAIL, BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST  
Join us for a fun weekend with SBFC staff and Wilderness Interns as we continue our annual tradition of opening the trail to the historic, 9,000 foot St. Mary’s Peak Fire Lookout. Learn how to use a cross-cut saw and axe to clear trees from the trail. We will also repair and maintain water-bars. This is a great opportunity to help us accomplish needed trail work above tree line in one of the most scenic areas in the Bitterroot. We will be car-camping in the valley and commuting to the worksite each day.  

JULY 12-18, 2017  
MARBLE CREEK TRAIL, PAYETTE NATIONAL FOREST  
Join SBFC staff and Wilderness Interns to perform a second year of trail opening and maintenance on the Marble Creek section of the 900 mile Idaho Centennial Trail. Volunteers will learn to use crosscuts, single-bit axes, Pulaskis and pick mattocks to clear the trail, remove downed trees and repair tread. This project is located in a remote and inspiring area of the Frank Church Wilderness. Pack support will be provided for group gear, tools, and food.  

JULY 13-16, 2017  
BLODGETT CANYON, BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST  
Blodgett Canyon has long been a major thoroughfare and destination for Native American Indians, trappers, and mountain travelers in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. The trail threads through a beautiful glacier-carved canyon and provides a perfect backdrop for a wilderness experience. With basecamp at the 7-mile meadow, SBFC Staff, Interns and Volunteers will use crosscuts and single-bit axes to continue clearing the remains of a 2015 microburst. Pack support will be provided to carry group gear, food, and tools.  

JULY 26-31, 2017  
COVE LAKES TRAIL, NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER NATIONAL FOREST  
Join SBFC staff and Wilderness Interns to clear trees up Trail #3 about 5.5 miles to the beautiful Cove Lakes, with a base camp on the edge of the lake. The hike will be moderately challenging, gaining about 1600’ in elevation with beautiful scenery along the way. We will continue to clear past the lakes towards Eagle Mountain trail #206. Volunteers will learn to use traditional tools, including cross-cut saws and single-bit axes. If we are lucky, some of the huckleberries will be ripe enough for pancakes!  

AUGUST 8-14, 2017  
WALTON LAKES TRAIL, NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER NATIONAL FOREST  
Join SBFC staff and Wilderness Interns to clear the Walton Lakes Trail #79 in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, using crosscut saws and traditional tools. The lovely Walton Lakes sit at the base of a rock-covered hillside. Beautiful views, fishing and soaking your feet in a crystal-clear lake at the end of a work day on the trail are some of the wilderness rewards this project offers. Pack support will be provided for group gear, food, and tools.  

AUGUST 23-28, 2017  
MIDDLE FORK TRAIL, SALMON-CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST  
Join SBFC and US Forest Service staff to maintain the Middle Fork Trail, the longest wilderness trail in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. The trail is heavily used by backpackers and stock packers and follows the Wild and Scenic Middle Fork of the Salmon River for many miles. Enjoy relaxing on the white sandy beaches along the river and gazing at the beautiful wildflowers scattered among the trail side. Volunteers will use crosscuts and single-bit axes to clear trees in the corridor and Pulaskis and pick-mattocks to repair tread. Pack support will be provided for group gear, food, and tools.  

SEPTEMBER 5-10 2017  
NORTHERN FRANK TOUR, BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST  
Join SBFC staff to help clear the Harrington Ridge loop, deep in the remote Wilderness. This portion of silver forest allows for expansive views of the steep canyons that define the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. We will meet and camp along the Magruder Corridor the evening of the 5th. The following day the group will hike approximately 10 miles into Swet Lake Cabin from the Salmon Base Camp Trailhead. After baring camp at the cabin, we will bump camp and gear along the loop to make the daily commute easier as needed. Volunteers should bring a large backpack to help carry group items. Pack support will be provided.  

SEPTEMBER 20-24  
STANLEY HOT SPRINGS, NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER NATIONAL FOREST  
Stanley Hot Springs is one of the most popular destinations on the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest! This annual, late-season project is an opportunity to clear, brush, and tidy up the trails surrounding the Boulder Creek Trail, before winter arrives. In September, daily temperatures are usually comfortable during the day and cool during the evenings, making an evening soak in the hot springs a wonderful experience. Group gear and tools will be packed in by stock. This project offers a nice balance of hard work and relaxation!  

1 – EASY  May include car-camping, less than a 5 mile hike to base-camp or hiking over easy terrain  
2 – FAIRLY EASY  May include less than an 8 mile hike to base-camp, pack-supported travel, or hiking and working in average terrain.  
3 – MODERATE  May include an average amount of hiking over variable terrain with a standard work-load.  
4 – CHALLENGING  May include hikes with significant elevation gain, long distance, or challenging work-loads.  
5 – VERY CHALLENGING  May include backpacking, bumping base-camp without stock, or carrying heavy gear and tools for several miles at a time.
The Idaho Humanities Council recently announced the publication of **IDAHO WILDERNESS CONSIDERED**, an anthology of essays, photos, and other reflections in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act and the establishment of new wilderness areas in Idaho in 2015. The book features contributions by 25 Idahoans, including an interview with Governor Cecil Andrus on his life in conservation, an essay by U.S. Congressman Mike Simpson on Boulder-White Clouds legislation, and more.

**Idaho Wilderness Considered**, edited by Boise environmental attorney and former SBFC Board Member, Murray Feldman, and Ketchum Community Library Director Jennifer Emery Davidson, is more than a field guide, more than a map and pictures of Idaho’s vast wilderness areas. It explores how and why those areas matter to the very character of the state.

The anthology is the capstone of a popular Idaho Humanities Council reading and conversation series on the history and meaning of wilderness, hosted in libraries and other venues throughout the state in 2014 and 2015. The contributions to the anthology by more than two dozen advocates, scholars, hikers, journalists, photographers, and others, explore the history, policy, law, literature, art, and science of Idaho wilderness, evoking the story of the land itself—deep, textured, and ongoing.

Idaho Conservation League Director Rick Johnson and Idaho Wilderness Society Regional Director Craig Gehrke reflect on their vocation to conservation advocacy, novelist Judith Freeman tells a story of living with bears in Salmon River country, journalist Rocky Barker reflects on wilderness and wildness, writers and hikers Bill Johnson of Lewiston and Mike Medberry and Nicole Lefavour of Boise reveal their love of being in the wild, journalist Mark Trahant remembers fishing with his family on the Yankee Fork of the Salmon, academic scholars Lisa Brady, John Freemuth, Rochelle Johnson, Scott Slovic, Alan Marshall, and Adam Sowards explore the history and future of wilderness, Sawtooth National Recreation Area backcountry manager Ed Cannady supplies a well of Boulder-White Clouds photos, and more.

Synopsis Courtesy of Rediscovered Books – 180 N 8th St – Boise, ID 83702 – 208-376-4229 www.rdbooks.org $15

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**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>Outdoor Conversations @ Rediscovered Books 7-9pm (Boise) – Idaho Centennial Trail/Steve Steubner</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>Idaho, Montana, and Missoula Gives</td>
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<td>May 10</td>
<td>SBFC Seasonal Staff reports to work</td>
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<td>May 15</td>
<td>SBFC Interns report to work</td>
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<td>May 16</td>
<td>Outdoor Conversations @ Rediscovered Books 7-9pm (Boise) – Hike Idaho/Scott Marchant</td>
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<td>May 31</td>
<td>Pint Night @ Kettlehouse 5-8pm (Missoula)</td>
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<td>June 3</td>
<td>National Trails Day</td>
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<td>June 5</td>
<td>Kegs for Kause @ Payette Brewing (Boise)</td>
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<td>June 14</td>
<td>2017 Volunteer projects start</td>
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<td>Oct 19</td>
<td>Telluride Mountainfilm Festival (Boise)</td>
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**ROW ADVENTURES**

And the winner is .......

We celebrated St. Patrick’s Day by drawing the winning ticket for this year’s Grand Raffle. This year’s lucky winners are John and Cindy Beck from Corvallis, MT. They have won a rafting trip for two and will be choosing between either the Middlefork of the Salmon or the Lower Salmon.

We can’t wait to see the photos John and Cindy! Have a terrific time! Thanks again to ROW Adventures for donating this trip! We truly appreciate the gift!

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**Upgrade to a Wilderness License Plate**

$22 goes to the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church FOUNDATION as a DONATION

You can upgrade ANY time!

Original design by Idaho artist Ward Hooper. Plate is $35 the first year/$25 for renewals. SBFC receives $22 first year/$12 renewals.

Order today at any DMV or on line at: https://www.accessidaho.org/secure/itd/personalized/plates.html. If your plates are not yet up for renewal, you may still order the Wilderness plates. Balance due is automatically computed based on your renewal date.

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Over 100 individuals volunteer each season to provide back country support for trail work, cabin hosting, lookout hosting, training our crews, sharpening our saws, and the list goes on. Many volunteers return year after year to serve and to connect with the peaceful solitude that can only be found in these special places. Their work and service is their respite.

Tom and Carol Strong are two such individuals who look forward to performing the daily rituals and chores, tackling the maintenance projects, connecting with the visitors who pass through the area, and relaxing in nature’s tranquility. This summer Tom and Carol will be celebrating their fifth season at the Moose Creek Ranger Station.

Moose Creek is located at the confluence of the Selway River and Moose Creek, twenty-seven miles west of Hamilton, MT. There are no roads, the only access is by foot, horse, or aircraft. The airstrips were built prior to the Wilderness Act, then grandfathered in.

Moose Creek Station has 12 wooden structures surrounded by fencing. Water comes from a large spring above the station and a wood stove is used to heat water as needed.

Please tell us a bit about your backgrounds and how you discovered Moose Creek. “Carol and I married in spring of 1992 and moved to Idaho Falls. We both love the outdoors, hiking, and camping and spent a lot of time exploring our new state. In 1999, I earned my private pilot’s license and discovered a new way to explore Idaho and the west. A pilot friend had told me about the Moose Creek airstrip and I was intrigued, but it wasn’t until 2011 that I finally landed my homebuilt/experimental RV9A there. Soon afterwards, we met Anna Bengtson and quizzed her about volunteer opportunities there. 2013 marked our first volunteer assignment, the month of August at Moose Creek! We fell in love with the place and have returned every year since.”

What sorts of projects do you generally do during your stay? “Just about anything that is needed around the Ranger Station. We shovel and clean the corral after the pack animals leave. We move irrigation sprinklers on a daily basis. We are Moose Creek “welcome hosts” to all pilots, rafters, and hikers. We maintain the primitive camping area next to the airstrip. We split firewood and replace empty propane cylinders as needed. We have also cleaned out fridges, swept and mopped the cookhouse, built fires in the shower house, repaired the propane freezer. Give us more to do, we’ll do it.”

What is the most memorable experience you’ve had at Moose Creek? “The most memorable experience was in 2015, visibility was down to 200 feet due to heavy fire smoke. Carol and the MCC kids were evacuated and had to hike and ride horses for twenty-seven miles to civilization.”

What keeps you coming back? “If feels like the place we are supposed to be. We would live at Moose Creek full-time if possible. All the people we meet or work with are amazing and friendly. Anna is the greatest!”

What would you tell someone who is considering volunteering? “If you enjoy getting away from the fast pace of our modern world and immersing yourself in nature, the wilderness, and isolation then please consider volunteering. Your heart and soul will forever thank you!”
FIELD WORK
Each summer we organize, transport, educate, feed, and manage crews and citizen volunteers for trail maintenance, wilderness monitoring, weed mitigation, cabin stewardship, and lookout hosting.

DEVELOP FUTURE LEADERS
Our internship program is a training ground for college students who will pursue careers that have a positive and lasting impact on wilderness and land conservation.

WILDERNESS AND PUBLIC LAND EDUCATION
Each year, with the Bitterroot National Forest, we host a Wilderness Skills Training Program for elementary school students. These students learn age-appropriate wilderness skills, such as “Leave No Trace”, and receive information that can translate to a lifelong appreciation of wilderness.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

$30  $60  $120  $240  $600  $________

Send gift with this form to:
SBFC Foundation – PO BOX 1886 Boise, ID 83701

Monthly and one-time payment options are available on our website: selwaybitterroot.org/take-action/

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