



Clearwater Defender

News of the Big Wild

Friends of the Clearwater

Fall 2004, Vol. 2 No. 2

Wilderness on its terms

By Gary Macfarlane

The cold water of the creek, deep inside the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, numbed the pain of my smashed knee. I had crossed too carelessly and quickly, in spite of intuition or premonition to the contrary, and went down so fast I couldn't recall the fall.

We engage with wilderness on its own terms, as I was forcefully reminded by my experience. This is by intent. The 1964 Wilderness Act describes wilderness as "untrammelled" by humans. This does not mean trampled, with which it is often confused, but it means unfettered or unconfined, allowing the free play of something. In other words, wilderness is self-willed land, a place we don't control where we allow natural forces to determine the character of the area. It is a place where we are, in the words of Aldo Leopold—the famous wildlife biologist, wilderness advocate, and philosopher of the mid 1900s—"plain members."

Some may equate Wilderness and the experiences we should have in Wilderness with other public values and experiences like a city park with smooth paths, manicured lawns, regulated forests, and rambunctious tree squirrels. That is a profound

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Wilderness Through My Eyes

By Carina Christiani

Working at Friends of the Clearwater this summer has opened my eyes to an entire new world that I did not know existed until I walked through the doors of our office on a hot June afternoon. I encountered a vast network of people working together to protect these amazing lands

we call wilderness. I was excited to be a part of such an enthusiastic and dedicated team of wilderness advocates, but before I was ready to step in, I had to think about what wilderness was in my mind – how what I knew before this internship was going to change after just a few days in this place.

When thinking of the word wilderness, many different images come to mind. I have not ever really thought of the definition of what wilderness is; it has always been a place, an image, and a memory. My observation has genuinely changed over the years, as I have grown and changed myself, seeing the world in dissimilar lights though certain stages of my life.

When I think of wilderness, as seen through my eyes as a child, I see trees that extend through the clouds and into the sky, endless in their height and stature. I see enormous bodies of water that would take years to cross, but yearning for me to take a leap in and try. I also remember bugs.

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error. Wilderness, as both a place and an idea, is “in contrast” to those places, even if those places seem more natural or undeveloped than our streets and buildings. Wilderness has a fierce beauty that allows us to interact with it, but on its terms. While emergency measures can be taken for the health and safety of people in Wilderness, it is done on the basis of the minimum necessary, recognizing the inherent risk in such an area.

One needs to become self-sufficient in wilderness, different than the modern world of cell phones, 9-1-1, and motor vehicles and conveyances. Risk itself is a value of Wilderness, a place where we can be alive, self-sufficient, and part of the greater whole. Wilderness is the place where our Pleistocene brains evolved. This interaction between ourselves and the wild harkens back to our genetic heritage. Indeed, my Pleistocene brain was working before I crossed that creek though I didn't heed the warnings as the modern part of my brain pushed me forward. A slew of thoughts ran through me, including the embarrassment of having to crawl back to my friends at our camp and having them “rescue” me. I decided to tough it out. In fact, I was so foolish I hiked another several miles before my knee swelled up and I had to turn around to go back to camp.

The overriding mandate of the Wilderness Act is preservation of an area's wilderness character. I was taught a good lesson about wilderness character as I ascended the trail to the trailhead, shuffling along in an ungainly gait.

But this was a real wilderness experience. I got out under my own power. I saw elk, deer and wolf tracks. My only regret was I came out too early. I started out on the trail early to give me extra time to get out. As it worked out, the uphill climb was just about as fast with my bum knee as normal.

My friends who stayed an extra night were serenaded that evening by wolves on Moose Creek as I was gulping aspirins on the return drive down

The Clearwater Defender is a publication of:



Friends of the Clearwater

PO Box 9241

Moscow, ID 83843

(208) 882-9755

foc@wildrockies.org

<http://www.wildrockies.org/foc>

Friends of the Clearwater, a recognized non-profit organization since 1987, defends the Idaho Clearwater Bioregion's wild lands and biodiversity through a Forest Watch program, litigation, grassroots public involvement, outreach, and education. The Wild Clearwater Country, the northern half of central Idaho's Big Wild, contains many unprotected roadless areas and wild rivers, and provides crucial habitat for countless rare plant and animal species. Friends of the Clearwater strives to protect these areas, restore degraded habitats, preserve viable populations of native species, recognize national and international wildlife corridors, and to bring an end to commodity extraction and industrialization on our public lands.

Friends of the Clearwater is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions the Friends of the Clearwater are tax-deductible.

The Clearwater Defender welcomes artwork and articles pertaining to the protection of the Greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem. Articles in the Clearwater Defender do not necessarily reflect the views of Friends of the Clearwater.

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Sheep Creek in the River of No Return Wilderness

Around the Wild Clearwater

Staff report

It is no secret the wildlands of the Clearwater are under threat. In fact, the Clearwater was the focus of a New York Times article on Aug. 9, 2004, which concluded with concerns from FOC. The administration is hostile to sound environmental policy though couching its intent in doublespeak. The prime example is the promise made by the administration and Forest Service to protect roadless areas three years ago, and the proposal is to end roadless protection. Yet the doublespeak is the government is still committed to roadless area protection. Here's a brief update on FOC activities to protect wildlands in the Clearwater. We start with those in designated Wilderness; after all it is the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

Obey! — FOC spent considerable time this past summer trying to convince the Forest Service to obey the Wilderness Act. On two trail projects, the Nez Perce NF officials proposed the use of motorized equipment that is banned in Wilderness except in rare circumstances (emergencies) or if it is the minimum necessary to protect the Wilderness. FOC, TECI, and Wilderness Watch temporarily won an appeal on one of the projects near Bilk Mountain (the other, along the Selway River Trail, was not subject to appeal) and we are hoping the dialogue conducted out in the field will lead to better wilderness stewardship. We understand Clearwater NF officials will recommend alternatives to motorized equipment on another trail project in the Selway-Bitterroot on Cliff Creek.

At the expense of the taxpayer — A few natural fires that started in the Frank Church and Gospel Hump Wildernesses in remote areas were put out at the expense of the taxpayer. Natural fires are part of the landscape and these fires have ecologi-

Meet your Friends' of the Clearwater (This series highlights FOC board members.)

Chris Norden of Moscow, President of FOC



Professor, Lewis-Clark State College, Lewiston

He's been a board member for about five years.

"FOC is the most effective grassroots ecosystem defense citizens' group I have ever seen."

"I am partial to the roadless parts of the North Fork country, pretty much any place you can't drive to, and especially wet places – always my favorite."

Want to learn more about the Clearwater Country? Chris recommends checking out:

- "Lochsa Story" by Bud Moore
- Alvin Josephy's "Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest" by Alvin Josephy
- "Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America," by Leo Marx
- "Wisdom of the Mythtellers," by Sean Kane
- "The Others," by Paul Shepard
- "Maps and Dreams, by Hugh Brody

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Bugs that would practically devour my small body if I didn't keep completely covered, swarming, pinching, and tickling me as I would trek through the forest. I see darkness, and I hear crickets, and feel the warmth of my father's chest as I snuggled close; he would be the only one who could save me if the bears came. And I knew, I just knew, that I would be their first and most favorite treat.

As I got a bit older, but not much, I began to see wilderness as freedom. Freedom from the wrath of an overprotective mother, freedom from peers that seem to make one's life terrible or worse and freedom from life at an awkward stage when you just can't wait to be older. Wild creatures, plants and lands that have no curfew, no book reports, and definitely no boy problems. Just free. Free from stress, free from fear, and free from conforming to what everyone else sees as normal. Free to just be, natural and beautiful.

As I have grown older, and more educated, and of course with my work with Friends of the Clearwater, wilderness has taken on an entirely new meaning and place in my heart. Although graphic descriptions of wild perfection could give you an idea of what I see when I think of wilderness, there is still the endless struggle to accurately define what these wild areas truly are and truly mean. First, I will explain my personal and graphic definition.

I will start with serenity. There is a single leaf upon a tree, miles from any person's touch. Dewdrops are formed perfectly across the surface as to create a lovely view for the leaves above and nothing else. The tree where this leaf resides is one of only a few, as the forest is full of many species, each unique and beautiful.

Trees are endless. Miles and miles of green that stop for nothing, except for the stream or river that runs through to keep the lands alive. These rivers and streams run with fresh, crisp clean water, so clean that the rocks below glisten from the beaming sunlight.

The perfect combination of water, air and life coming together to create serenity and peace, the sound of true life, of survival, the wild. Here

is a world that would go on without man, a world that needs no intervention or re-creation.

It is scary to think that someday due to destruction and complete disregard that people (or at least some of them) have for the values of wilderness, many will not be able to even picture in their mind this wonderful wild.

Wilderness means so many things and it is important in so many ways that one person's perspective will never be able to do it justice. Each person needs to take a moment and visualize what wilderness is to them, and learn to grow from that initial vision. Its important to remember that wilderness is not just a place of beauty, but has many natural and spiritual connections as well as the true connection when a person is alone in the wild. Wilderness is important for one's health and sanity.

The authors of the Wilderness Act had a great image of wilderness: "In contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

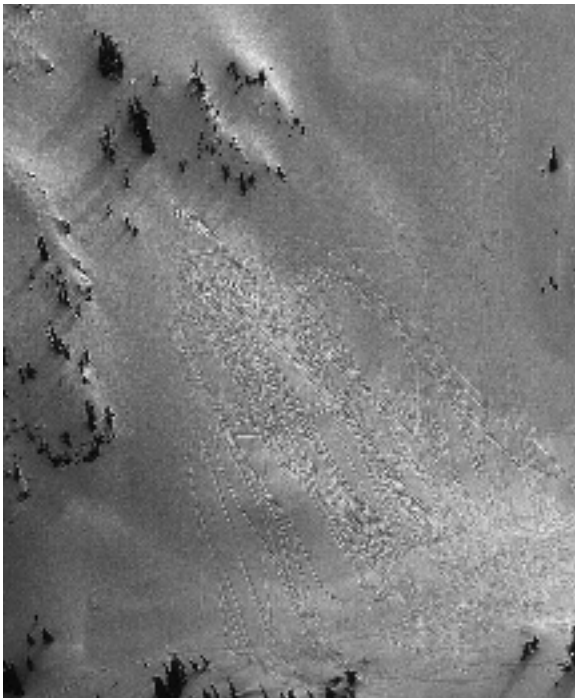
Hopefully, we will come to a point where all people, especially decision makers, will see the importance of this idea. People will see that we need a place where nature can take its course and replenish itself without any intervention or amendments. Wilderness is a place with no roads, no ORV's, and no people with their idea of what is "needed" – a place without man's self serving use of the land.

This is why I ask all of you to take some time and think about what wilderness means to you, and why it is important in your life. I think only then can we truly value it, and begin our work to protect it. I have begun my work to do this, and although my time with Friends of the Clearwater is limited, I will not forget why this work is so important, and why I will continue to contribute to this great cause. Wilderness is a great gift to us, and we must always remember that..

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cal benefits. It was a waste of time, money, and a slap in the face to the wilderness character of these areas. Fire is every bit a part of the wilderness as snow, rain, wind and wolves.

Assault on South Fork — The Nez Perce National Forest and Cottonwood BLM have six large timber sales recently approved or planned for the South Fork Clearwater drainage. Because of the concern over the impact on water quality and fisheries, Friends of the Clearwater, the Nez Perce Tribe, American Lands and other conservation organization cooperated on a national report and media that featured, among other areas, the South Fork Clearwater.



Legal action — Because of the assault on the South Fork and elsewhere, Friends of the Clearwater has been forced into court on the Meadow Face timber sale (Nez Perce National Forest, South Fork Drainage). Western Environmental Law Center

is representing us and our other partners include the Ecology Center, Idaho Sporting Congress and Alliance for the Wild Rockies. FOC and ICL are also challenging the Whiskey South sale (on the Nez Perce National Forest and the Cottonwood Resource Area, BLM) in the same watershed. We are represented by Advocates for the West. Advocates for the West is also representing Friends of the Clearwater and the Ecology Center on a lawsuit challenging two sales on Lolo Creek in the Clearwater National Forest.

Blurry or clear vision for the future? The Forest Service is embarking on revision of the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forest Plans. The St. Joe Ranger District (which includes the Little North Fork Clearwater and St. Joe Rivers) of the Panhandle National Forest and the headwaters of the Selway River (within Wilderness) on the Bitterroot National Forest are also undergoing revision. FOC has met with agency officials and provided detailed information on a variety of topics, sponsored presentations at the University of Idaho, and we have completed our Ancient Cedar Report (see FOC's Web site at <http://www.wildrockies.org/foc> for a copy). We expect that the Clearwater/Nez Perce National Forests will begin formal public comment soon. We will provide detailed information to members on where and when to write. Whether the new plans propose to keep or drop the good existing water quality standards, deal with the problem of unregulated off-road vehicles, and protect unroaded areas remains to be seen, but a sound wager is that without massive public outcry, the Forest Service will follow the path most destructive to wildlands and watersheds.

Don't miss it!

November 12 – Annual FOC meeting at the 1912 Building! Food, silent auction, fabulous conversation! Check e-mail for details or call (208) 882-9755.

Rally around the Wild – Wilderness Act celebrates 40 years

By Gary Macfarlane

Wilderness evokes great passion. The word carries with it much meaning as it touches upon our relationship to the natural world. The 1964 Wilderness Act was a milestone. For the first and perhaps only time, a law was passed that wasn't full of boring legal screed. The law itself is poetic and inspires citizens to rally around the cause of guarding our

interests. Yet a few salmon still swim the Selway and lightning, wind and rain still largely define the large designated Wildernesses of the Wild Rockies.

The Clearwater country is the northern half of the largest relatively intact ecosystem in the lower 48 states. The greater area goes by several names including the Salmon-Clearwater Ecosystem, greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem, or simply the Big Wild.

The Clearwater region is blessed with wildlands. Let's take a moment to reflect on the



public wildlands.

Today, Wilderness is under great threat. Even many conservationists and environmentalists misunderstand the concepts of Wilderness – believing it to be merely a place where motors and roads are prohibited or a place where the goal is to make it look like it did 200 years ago – and therein lies a danger. Wilderness is a self-willed landscape, where natural processes define and change the character of the landscape. The threats to both designated Wilderness and potential Wilderness need to be resisted. At times it seems overwhelming. Over six billion people (and counting) all seeming to want an increased standard of living present perhaps the greatest impediment to survival of wildlands, not to mention the future of the planet. Proposals to develop wildlands for products and efforts to commodify and privatize public lands are supported by powerful economic

40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act and our shared wildland heritage by recommitting ourselves to protection of real wilderness so the vision of the Wilderness Act, “an enduring resource of wilderness” can be realized. A great way to start is by writing a letter of support to Congress for a most visionary piece of legislation, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act, which would designate as wilderness all deserving unprotected Clearwater wildlands.

Designated Wilderness in or adjacent to the Clearwater:

Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness
Gospel hump Wilderness
Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness
Hells Canyon Wilderness*

Unprotected/Proposed Wildernesses Clearwater

Region

Selway-Bitterroot Additions (Includes the famous Meadow Creek, South Lochsa Face and others)

Weitas Creek (also includes Cayuse Creek)

Pot Mountain

Kelly Creek (or Great Burn)

Fish and Hungry Creeks

Upper North Fork (includes Rawhide)

Mallard-Larkins

River of No Return/Gospel Hump Additions (includes Cove/Mallard and other areas)

Grandmother Mountain

Silver Creek-Pilot Knob

Weir/Post Office

Moose Mountain

Lick Point

North Fork Slate Creek

Little Slate Creek

Clear Creek

John Day Creek

Siwash

O'Hara Creek

Goddard Creek.

Middle Fork Face

Dixie Summit/Nut Hill-

Eldorado Creek

Kelly Mountain

*Hells Canyon Additions (includes Rapid River and other areas) adjacent to the Clearwater region



‘Authenticity of Wilderness’

By TinaMarie Ekker

Policy director of Wilderness Watch

“Wilderness is a place of restraint, for managers as well as visitors.”

— Pinchot Institute for Conservation, Ensuring the Stewardship of the National Wilderness Preservation System, 2001

All cultures across history have set some places apart from the routines and common behaviors of daily life. The purpose of these special places is to reorient our focus and perceptions in a setting conducive to reflection. We approach such places differently than we do other places in our daily lives. It is the way we interact with places set apart that makes them special, and enables us to experience the unique values these places provide in nurturing the human spirit. Examples include shrines, memorials, and ceremonial sites. Wilderness also is such a place.

Like all special places set apart, Wilderness is not just a geographic location; it is also an idea and an ideal. The idea of Wilderness encompasses certain values that we as a society have chosen to protect. Congress enacted the Wilderness Act in 1964 (P.L. 88-577), with the singular statutory purpose of securing the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness:

“. . . it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness. For this purpose there is hereby established a National Wilderness Preservation System . . .” (emphasis added) The Wilderness Act, Sec. 2(a)

The Wilderness Act intended that Wilderness should have meaning, that it would be protected for something, not simply be a place where certain activities such as logging do not occur. Although wilderness may look similar to other

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undeveloped landscapes such as national park backcountry or national forest roadless areas, how humans interact with wilderness is what makes it different from other landscapes. To assure that the benefits of wilderness will continue to exist for generations to come, the Wilderness Act contains principles and statutory direction intended to shape and guide our relationship with these special places.

In preserving Wilderness we are preserving an endangered experience, and an endangered idea — the idea that self-willed landscape has intrinsic value and should exist. Wilderness offers an opportunity to experience between humans and the more-than-human world that is increasingly rare in these modern times, a relationship in which humans do not dominate, manipulate, or control nature but instead immerse ourselves as members in the larger community of life.

What makes this possible is the authenticity of Wilderness. The forces of genuine wild nature still shape the essence of these special places as they have since time began. Wilderness offers us a portal into a world different from the one humans have sculpted and now dominate. In wilderness, the beauty and mystery of wildness can still exist. It is because wilderness is authentic that it has immense intrinsic value as part of the ancient history and fabric of Earth.

Experiencing our connection to a world larger than ourselves is the timeless symbolic value provided by all special places set apart. Keeping wilderness real and alive in our world today depends upon the attitude and behaviors with which we interact with these congressionally

designated landscapes. In this way, wilderness is not just physical geography, it is also an idea and a relationship that must be protected and preserved if *wilderness* — not just undeveloped landscape — is to continue to exist for future generations to know and enjoy.

- With passage of the Wilderness Act in 1964, Congress gave wilderness a legal definition: “A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.” — The Wilderness Act, Section 2(c)

- The Wilderness Act expressly prohibits motorized equipment, mechanical transport, commercial enterprise, and the placement of structures and installations precisely because allowing the routine intrusion of such things blurs the distinction between wilderness and modern society. The more these intrusions are allowed to occur in wilderness, the less meaning

wilderness will have. The more we as a society allow wilderness to become motorized, commercialized and convenient the less opportunity there will be for present and future generations to know the unique psychological, symbolic, and experiential values that wilderness provides.

- The overarching mandate of the Wilderness Act is to preserve the wilderness *character* of each area in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). Wilderness character, like personal character, is comprised of more than just physical
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features; it encompasses both tangible and intangible qualities. Preserving wilderness character is vital to keeping alive the meaning of wilderness in America. Some tangible components of wilderness character include the presence of native wildlife at naturally occurring population levels; lack of human structures, roads, motor vehicles or mechanized equipment; lack of crowding or large groups; few or no human improvements for visitor convenience, such as highly engineered and over-developed trails, developed campsites, signs, or bridges; and little or no sign of biophysical damage caused by visitor use, such as denuded soil, or habituated or displaced wildlife.

- “Wilderness solitude is a state of mind, a mental freedom that emerges from settings where visitors experience nature essentially free of the reminders of society, its inventions, and conventions. Privacy and isolation are important components, but solitude also is enhanced by the absence of other distractions, such as large groups, mechanization, unnatural noise, signs, and other modern artifacts. . . it is conducive to the psychological benefits associated with wilderness and one’s free and independent response to nature.” — *U.S. Fish & Wildlife Draft Wilderness Stewardship Policy* (Federal Register Jan. 16 2001)

Public Use.

- The Wilderness Act identifies a number of allowable public purposes for wilderness. These are recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use. It is important to keep in mind that these public purposes are not the statutory purpose of the act. They are the appropriate purposes for which the public may use wilderness. While these public purposes are allowable uses of wilderness, they are not mandatory. The public purposes or uses do not take precedence over the act’s singular statutory purpose to preserve an enduring

resource of wilderness by preserving the wilderness character of each area in the NWPS.

- “*Except as otherwise provided in this act, each agency administering any area designated as wilderness shall be responsible for preserving the wilderness character of*



the area and shall so administer such area for such other purposes for which it may have been established as also to preserve its wilderness character.” — The Wilderness Act

If any of the allowable public uses of wilderness conflict with the preservation of an area’s wilderness character, then, by law, protecting wilderness character has priority. A wilderness can be completely closed to one or all of these public purposes if such use would diminish or degrade components of wilderness character. For this reason, there are several wildernesses that are completely closed year round to any public entry as well as some that are closed to the public for part of each year.

Friends of the Clearwater
P. O. Box 9241
Moscow, ID 83843

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Keep-it-Close By ... Calendar of Events

Oct. 27 – Clearwater Valley Education
and Publicity Tour

**Nov. 12 – Annual FOC meeting at the
1912 Building! Food, silent auction,
fabulous conversation! Check e-mail
for details. If you have something to
donate for the silent auction, please
contact the office.**

Nov. 17 – Potluck! Check weekly e-mail
for details!

Please stop by and visit us at our
new office! We are located at
116 East 3rd St, above the T-shirt
Shack in Moscow.

Contact us at (208) 882-9755 or
foc@wildrockies.org

Reminder: We still have kayak
and tent raffle tickets for sale!