



CLEARWATER DEFENDER

NEWS OF THE BIG WILD

A PUBLICATION OF
FRIENDS OF THE CLEARWATER

ISSUED QUARTERLY
SUMMER 2013, NO.2

The Idaho Legislature Wants To Steal Our Public Lands

**Guest Opinion
FOC Member, Bonnie Schonefeld**

Unlike the majority of Americans, who are co-owners of our commons, Idahoans have the incredible privilege of living next to vast expanses of public lands. It is not by accident that we live here. Al and I made a conscious decision to move to Idaho County based on its proximity to public lands, roadless and primitive areas.

Now we understand that the state of Idaho is considering taking this land away from the rest of Americans, people who don't get to live here, but who still own the land and who pay taxes to help finance the care and infrastructure on that land. It belongs to all of us, all 300-million plus American citizens. It also belongs to my nephews who moved to Idaho after they joined us for their first backpacking trip, and my cousins who live from coast to coast across the country, my sister and nephews in Colorado, my mother in California and, most important, our grandchildren and great nieces and nephews who will one day be the next generation to use, visit and be renewed by this land.

While wilderness provides the incubator for wildlife, fisheries, clean water and clean air, it is the frontcountry that reaps the benefits. This is where most people camp, fish, hunt, and picnic, pick berries and take pictures. It's where we take our young grandkids to experience nature.

This is the land the legislature wants to take away from all of us. This is the land, based on a "back of a napkin" financial analysis, they somehow think will rake in millions of dollars for the state. And if the cost of fighting fires, campground maintenance, road and trail repair, etc. (costs currently born by all of us) on this land exceeds the benefits, the legislature has a plan: just sell the land so only the highest bidder will have access to our birthright. This "takings" of land from its current owners has extreme consequences for all of us: we have NEVER been "locked out" of any public land, only from private land.

Bottom line: this proposal is a very bad idea and we're tired of our taxpayer dollars being used to finance ill-conceived jousts at windmills.



**Idaho Wants 33-Million Acres Of Federal
Public Lands That Belong To All Americans**

Bonnie Schonefeld Photo

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FOC Benefit Concert With Kelly Emo & Others
Kelly Emo Photo Credit

The March 2013 FOC Benefit Concert at the 1912 Center in Moscow was a huge success. We would like to thank local musicians Kelly Emo, Al Chidester, Brian Gill, Marty Ytreberg, and Smokin' Mojo for their time, talent, and efforts. The event raised \$2,000.00!

We also want to acknowledge the efforts of FOC member Tom Peterson for web-support and thank our local businesses Gnosh, Wine Company of Moscow and Pizza Perfection for their contributions. Plans are under way for a 2014 shin-dig. All proceeds help keep it big and wild!



We would like to thank University of Idaho professor emeritus Dr. Jim Peek and the *Wildlife Society-UI Student Chapter* for delivering a program in March at the 1912 Center in Moscow titled, *North American Large Predators: A review of large mammalian predator management across North America during the last thirty years.*

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FRIENDS OF THE CLEARWATER

THE CLEARWATER DEFENDER
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Friends of the Clearwater, a recognized nonprofit organization since 1987, defends the Clearwater Bioregion's wildlands 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 bring an end to commodity extraction and industrialization on public lands.

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

The Clearwater Defender welcomes artwork and articles pertaining to the protection of the Big Wild. Articles in the Clearwater Defender do not necessarily reflect the views of Friends of the Clearwater.

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Reaching Out To You

Brett Haverstick

Following this year's 40th Anniversary Moscow Renaissance Fair, I'm whipped and in need of a backpacking trip. But before I go, here is a summary of this spring's activities:

- A big thank you to everyone that volunteered and helped us prepare and sell huckleberry and smoked salmon savory crepes at this year's Fair. We would also like to recognize the *Fish Folks* for their generous donation and yummy Alaskan-caught wild salmon.
- We would like to thank *Idaho Gives* for the opportunity to participate in the May 2, 2013 state-wide non-profit charitable giving program. We greatly appreciate those individuals that made donations to our organization.
- In late April, FOC and *Wildlands CPR* teamed up for a field trip with Professor Beth Newingham and a group of University of Idaho restoration ecology students. We visited a road-decommissioning site on the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests and discussed the socio-economic and ecological benefits of road removal.
- On a soggy weekend in early April, FOC and a group of University of Idaho recreation students hiked into the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. It marked the third year in a row that we were given the opportunity to camp with students and discuss the history of the 1964 Wilderness Act and the National Wilderness Preservation System. Thanks Professor Tami Goetz!
- Prior to that trip, we participated in Lewis-Clark State College's *Hell's Canyon Institute*. With an invitation from Professor Patricia Keith, we got the opportunity to speak with students about the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (NREPA) and the significance of the greater-Hells Canyon Ecosystem. We hope to be invited back in 2014!
- In March, FOC worked with the *University of Idaho Ecology and Conservation Biology Club* to deliver a program about the potential listing of the wolverine as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. And the *Kootenai Environmental Alliance* hosted us in Coeur d'Alene for a similar program, as part of their Lunch & Learn series.

- Washington State University Instructor Mark DeLaurier and his communication students did an outstanding job preparing an analysis of the communication tools that FOC uses in engaging the public on wildland issues. Thanks to them, we now have a Twitter account!
- Lastly, Fred Rabe and the *Palouse-group Sierra Club* worked with us to produce a booklet about the Hoodoo Roadless Area, also known as Kelly Creek. We also want to thank *Lighthawk* and *Alpha 1 Photography* for their contributions to this project. Please contact us if you would like us to mail you a copy of the booklet!



Selway River Spring Backpacking With UI Students
FOC File Photo

Justice of the trees

Justice of the trees
You must shed your stars
Abide in favor of the waters
Tremble if the word speaks the fabulous
shadow of its breezes

You must climb above the shade you create
You must hang myriad eyes upon your
topmost branches

And birds shall be your dreams
Be the passion that is never stopped
by man

- Laurence Weisberg, Poems, Anon Edition, 2004

Poem submitted by FOC member Bill Beck

Major Victory For Wild & Scenic Rivers!

Guest Opinion

**Kevin Lewis, Conservation Policy Director
Idaho Rivers United**

In a clear victory for Idaho's Wild and Scenic Rivers, Boise District Judge B. Lynn Winmill ruled Feb. 7 that the U.S. Forest Service and Federal Highway Administration "acted unlawfully" when they determined they could not regulate mega-loads within the Wild and Scenic Lochsa and Clearwater River corridor of northern Idaho.

Only twenty-four hours after presiding over oral arguments, Judge Winmill issued his 18-page decision that erased any doubts as to whether or not the federal government had authority to manage its lands – including activities within the highway easement of U.S. Hwy 12.

Three years ago, Idaho Rivers United, Friends of the Clearwater, the Nez Perce Tribe, local residents and thousands of other concerned citizens from across the country petitioned the state of Idaho and the Forest Service to block plans to ship massive loads of equipment through the Wild & Scenic River corridor of the Middle Fork Clearwater and Lochsa Rivers.

Unfortunately, the state ignored our pleas and the Forest Service determined that, while they believed that mega-loads were inconsistent with Wild & Scenic values, they were powerless to take action due to the highway easement that had been granted to Idaho.

In March of 2011, Idaho Rivers United sued the Forest Service and Federal Highway Administration in federal district court to determine the issue of jurisdiction and for failing to protect the Wild & Scenic values of the river corridor.

With representation by Advocates for the West, Idaho Rivers United pursued the lawsuit to protect this nationally-treasured and federally-protected river corridor – America's first Wild & Scenic River, a National Scenic Byway, an All American Road, and the Nez Perce Trail.

In early 2012, Judge Winmill dismissed our "failure to act" claims based on a previous Supreme Court decision but allowed our jurisdictional claims to proceed to briefing and, ultimately, the oral arguments and decision in early February.

Judge Winmill's positive ruling was a critical step in the fight to prevent the industrialization of a Wild & Scenic River Corridor and clears a path for the Forest Service to protect the many values that we treasure.

Recently, Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests Supervisor Rick Brazell indicated the Forest Service's desire to move forward in light of the ruling. "We will



Wild & Scenic Lochsa River, US 12

Gerry Snyder Photo

be working with Idaho Transportation Department and Federal Highways on this issue," he said. "Once we have developed the appropriate definitions and protocols we will be better able to address concerns and questions. We are working diligently in this matter to provide the best management to the natural resources as we develop and implement an appropriate response with respect to the Highway 12 issue."

Idaho Rivers United is committed to working with the Forest Service and our partners and supporters to ensure that the Wild & Scenic Corridor returns to its previous form and the many values of local residents and the conservation community remain protected as Congress intended in 1968.

Contact us at

foc@friendsoftheclearwater.org

to receive the Big Wild Bi-Weekly.

Issues. Happenings. Updates.

You can also follow us on

Facebook and Twitter!

An Intern's Perspective

Noah Hoff, Community Organizing Intern Spring 2013

Are you interested in volunteering at Friends of the Clearwater? My name is Noah Hoff and for my senior capstone class at Washington State University, I chose to intern at Friends of the Clearwater. I originally decided to contact Friends of the Clearwater because they are involved with environmental issues like public land and wildlife conservation. Having inherited a love of nature from my mother's side of the family, I am drawn to subjects of this matter and knew this is where I wanted to pursue my internship. Little did I know that this internship would have such a significant and positive impact on my perspectives and future endeavors.

During my time interning at Friends of the Clearwater, I have strengthened my passion for the conservation of America's wildlands, while also broadening my organizational and event planning skills. Working under Gary and Brett's charismatic style of leadership has given me the opportunity to really succeed in my position as Community Organizer and take lessons with me that I will never forget.

The significant guidance and leadership within the Friends of the Clearwater office is something I will always cherish and take with me throughout life. I cannot express the amount of support I received while working with this organization.

I have also learned a great deal about grassroots organizational work and the impressive impact it can create in a small community like Moscow; not to mention the vast networking connections I have also established while working here. The amount of passion, friendliness and perseverance within this organization is extraordinary and magnetic. It's almost as though positivity flows through the office air. I can honestly say that I have never met a greater group of determined individuals in my life.

With everyone's constant support and help, we were able to plan and execute multiple events in my four months of interning, including a music benefit concert, which earned \$2,000--a big thanks to Kelly Emo.

The workplace experience at Friends of the Clearwater has been extremely useful and directly applies to the kind of non-profit organizational work I plan to do in the future.

I am extremely honored and privileged to have been a part of the organization this semester and wish more than anything I could stay longer, but plans for attending graduate school are calling. At Multnomah University in Portland, I hope to Master in Global Devel-

opment and Justice and broaden my horizons with non-profit work around the world. I have no doubt in my mind that this internship has further prepared me for whatever future work experiences I will encounter later on in life.

Specifically I want to extend a thank you to Gary Macfarlane, Brett Haverstick and FOC Board members for giving me the opportunity to serve alongside you and be a part of this wonderful organization. The life lessons, workplace experience and friendships I made while interning here will never be forgotten. Hopefully someday, I will be able to repay it all.

Friends of the Clearwater is an incredible organization that works with extreme passion and integrity in preserving the scenic wilderness lands of Idaho. I encourage everyone to get involved and support this great cause. Thank you all.



Community Organizing Intern Noah Hoff
FOC File Photo

Editor's Note: FOC's Board and Staff cannot thank Noah enough for his outstanding attitude and work ethic while he was with us this spring. We wish him nothing but the best as he pursues his dreams in life. Stay true to the wild!

We are currently looking for a new intern, so if you know anyone, send them our way!

Around The Clearwater

Gary Macfarlane

FOC has been involved in many issues the past few months in an effort to keep the Clearwater wild. The following are only a summary of some of the most significant issues. If you want to learn more about specific issues, please contact the FOC office at (208) 882-9755.

Good News

Wilderness Watch and Friends of the Clearwater appealed a decision by the US Forest Service to use helicopters to replace a bridge in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness over Running Creek near its confluence with the Selway River. In the appeal, we pointed out that there were other options to motorized intrusion and those methods should have been adopted. During the appeal resolution meeting, the Forest Service took a closer look, agreed with our concerns, and withdrew the decision. As per our suggestion, a packable bridge design option was then chosen, proving yet again that the agency can keep alive the traditional skills necessary to administer wilderness without motorized equipment. This should serve as a positive example for better wilderness administration.

Also, the Forest Service has resisted attempts to allow placer mining claims along the N. Fork Clearwater River after several mining claims had been recently staked in the area. The agency, under a 1955 Mining Law that applies only to rivers, which had been previously withdrawn for possible power development by Congress, challenged those claims, in front of an administrative law judge set up by the Department of Interior. FOC filed an administrative petition and brief (an Amicus or friend of the court brief) supporting the Forest Service. However, the judge determined our interests would be represented by the Forest Service so our petition was denied. The evidence presented at the hearing clearly supports not granting those claims. A decision is expected later this year.

In a somewhat related and fairly good step, the Idaho Department of Water Resources and the Environmental Protection Agency declared most of the Clearwater Basin closed to recreational suction dredge mining. Exceptions are smaller tributaries in the North Fork Clearwater River. These areas should have been closed as well, but it is probable that most of these streams won't see any recreational suction dredging in the near future.

Not Yet Good or Bad News

The upper Lochsa Land Exchange is grinding along. The Idaho County Commissioners are working with Western Pacific Timber, who hired former U.S. Senator Larry Craig (R-ID) as a lobbyist, to look into a potential "legislative" exchange. It seems that U.S. Senator Jim Risch (R-ID) is willing to look at such an exchange as a possible course of action, depending on what the Forest Service decides to do with its final decision. The Bureau of Land Management was brought into the discussion as well, so the issue is getting rather confusing and complex.

A legislative exchange would likely trade much more valuable national forest acreage for the cutover upper Lochsa area on an acre for acre basis. This is unlike an "administrative exchange", which must be of approximate equal value. Under a legislative exchange, US citizens would lose valuable public lands. However, it is rather unlikely (though not impossible) that a legislative exchange could actually be passed. Meanwhile, the Forest Service is doing an appraisal that includes much additional land in Idaho County, at the insistence of the Idaho Congressional delegation. This will only add to the cost of any purchase or exchange.

The only reasonable solution is the direct purchase of the upper Lochsa land by the public. Had the Forest Service advocated for such a proposal with citizens from the beginning, it is possible that this issue would now be behind us. A decision by the Forest Service on an administrative exchange is expected in late fall of this year.

FOC also filed comments recently on two important national policy issues that will affect the Clearwater. The first set of comments were on the national forest planning directives. There are serious problems with the directives regarding how to conduct public involvement. The directives amplify the idiotic caste system, set up in the national forest planning rule, which treats citizen comments unequally.

The second set of comments was directed to the US Fish and Wildlife Service regarding their proposal to list the wolverine as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act in the lower 48 states. The rare wolverine is found in the wilder parts of the Clearwater. Citing recent studies, we suggested the Service should consider an endangered listing and provide habitat protection for the wolverine.

EarthJustice filed important comments for several organizations, including Save Our Wild Salmon, Idaho Rivers United, the Sierra Club and Friends of the Clearwater on the Army Corps of Engineers' silly plan to dredge around Lewiston, Clarkston and the Snake/Clearwater River confluence. Local residents Lin Laughy,

Borg Hendrickson and Dustin Ahern also pointed out how the environmental and economic costs of this project were unacceptable. A decision will be coming in the next several months.

Bad News

The Forest Service is embarking on a nationwide program to up the logging levels on national forests. This is happening in spite of the fact that in forests like the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests, fish habitat or water quality standards are not being met in most places that have been logged in the past. Thus, the agency is failing in its promise to the American public.

On the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests, there are at least four problematic sales in progress. The first is Clear Creek, a massive timber sale and collaborative project that would log up to 85-million board feet. This is as much as the infamous *Cove/Mallard Timber Sales*, which were eventually stopped in the 1990s, though damage was done. (See more in this newsletter on what you can do to prevent or modify the Clear Creek Sale). The others are the recently approved lower Orogrande sale, which FOC intends to appeal (the last sales that will be subject to appeal), the Saddle Camp sale in the Lochsa River area, and also the Lolo Bugs, a sale that will log in a roadless area! So much for the Idaho Roadless Rule protecting roadless areas.

Finally, Congress is yet again trying to destroy wilderness, this time with the help of the recreation industry. Representative Dan Benishek (R-MI) has introduced an awful bill that would allow all sorts of manipulation by state Fish and Game agencies in wilderness. Further, Grant Simonds, president of the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association, wants to allow the use of motorized equipment in wilderness. Wilderness-minded outfitters should reject the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association and form an organization that honors wilderness in every sense.



The Clearwater Basin Collaborative Wants To “Restore” The Clear Creek Drainage

FOC File Photo

Clear Creek Project Take Action

The Clear Creek drainage, a tributary of the Middle Fork Clearwater that enters the river just above Kooskia, is the site of the Forest Service’s massive Clear Creek timber sale, erroneously titled the Clear Creek Integrated Restoration Project. Logging and thinning would occur on up to 10,000-acres (alternative C), which is about one quarter of the entire watershed. Except for the no-action alternative, other options would log between 62-85 million board feet of timber. That is more timber than what comes off the entire Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests in two years.

Impacts to water quality and terrestrial wildlife habitat could be significant. The draft Environmental Impact Statement misleads the public by comparing apples and oranges when it comes to fish habitat and water quality. Thus, it is hard to tell if there has been any real improvement over the past twenty-five years or if water quality objectives are currently being met.

Furthermore, the cuts will be large. Clearcuts (which supposedly will leave a few trees) are grouped together in certain places, meaning that they may each be around 500-acres in size.

Old growth will be logged, ostensibly to improve habitat. There is no scientific basis for doing that in the kind of forests that are found in the Clear Creek watershed. Indeed, the entire premise of the project is based upon faulty assumptions.

Electronic comments can be sent to: comments-northern-nezperce-moose-creek@fs.fed.us or **via physical mail to:** Lois Hill Interdisciplinary Team Leader, Kamiah Ranger Station 903 3rd Street Kamiah, ID 83536. **Deadline for public comments is June 3, 2013.**

Possible Points to Consider

--No logging should take place in any watershed not meeting forest plan water quality or fish habitat objectives.

--Alternatives should have been developed that do not propose logging in old growth forest.

--Alternatives should have been developed that do not require the building of new roads in an already heavily-roaded watershed.

The following letters contain various perspectives from individuals who firmly believe that public lands need to stay in public hands. Over the coming year, we will be printing letters from individuals around the country who share a similar sentiment. If you would like your letter to appear in this newsletter, please submit them, along with a picture, to foc@friendsoftheclearwater.org. Try and keep them to 250 words. Thanks!



Public Lands Are For Future Generations, Too
Vince Murray Photo Credit

Seven years ago my wife and I drove to Mexico for the winter. We drove a pickup truck with a camper shell, hoping to do what we always do in Idaho—drive some miles each day until we grow tired and then pull over and camp for the night. Simple concept, one we’ve always taken for granted. On our first day we didn’t make it past the lower Salmon River. Too many hiking possibilities to pass without stopping sooner than planned. Then we hit Utah and its canyon country. Same problem, although there we hiked in BLM slick-rock canyons, rather than the fir/ponderosa trails of Idaho.

In New Mexico, same story. Acres and acres of National Forest lands available to anyone who had the desire or, more aptly, the need to spend time outside. No need to barricade ourselves in hotels for the night.

Then we left New Mexico and encountered Texas, and suddenly we were forced to continue driving each day much longer than we had hoped. West Texas doesn’t have National Forests or BLM land, so we could no longer camp. That simple state border forced us into hotels, even though we searched for camping spots, often asking locals for suggestions. Only one night were we able to “camp,” a cramped night spent with many other travelers in a rest

area just north of McDonald Observatory. Only when we reached Big Bend National Park, did fortune reverse itself. Finally we were able to camp, albeit in designated campgrounds, most of the time.

When we crossed into Mexico, camping was even more limited. Again, during warm, star-filled nights in the south, we ended up within stuffy hotel rooms, bound by four walls, incandescent lights replacing the moon.

And now some Idahoans want to sell our National Forest lands to the highest bidder. Who will benefit from this plan? Same people who always gain from state giveaways. Who will lose? Same people who always lose, you and me. And we’ll lose not just our favorite camping spots. We’ll lose our freedom to move about in our own state. We’ll lose our access, to that which makes Idaho unique, that which makes our days life-full. We’ll lose more than can ever be replaced by hollow promises from those who desperately want these lands just for themselves.

--Vince Murray Moscow, Idaho

I never really thought much about being surrounded by public lands until I left Idaho for 25 years. I just knew that the forest was my home. Born in Grangeville, Idaho, I was four years old when my dad, a logger working for the Potlatch Corporation, moved the family to a logging camp near Avery, Idaho. It was an ideal place for growing up. The family camps were awash in children and young mothers who were left to fend for themselves during the week, while the men were in “spike” camps out in the woods logging for a living.

We had no TV, so our lives revolved around the outdoors – summers were filled with days of picnics and fishing in clear, cold mountain streams, swimming in the St. Joe River, and huckleberry picking in late summer. Deer and elk were hunted in the fall for the supply of meat that would feed us the following year. Winters were endless days of snow-play and/or cabin fever. The snow was so deep it covered logging trucks and cabins. Surrounded by national forest as we were, it was almost impossible to get to a population center once winter set in, and we seldom went, even when the roads were passable the rest of the year.

Our lives were insular and complete. Mothers took turns driving the camp kids to school in Avery, where we were taught two-grades per classroom by caring and dedicated teachers who lived in housing provided for them next to the school.

Outdoor play, clean mountain air, pure water, wildlife, and silence were all part of every day. Each

changing season brought new surprises. It was an innocent time and one that is hard to replicate today as forests disappear and public lands are endangered by political decisions. I cherish the memories.

--Sioux Westervelt Troy, Idaho

Early February newspaper articles confirmed my doubts that the Idaho legislature knows nothing about the importance of public lands to wildlife, clean water and recreation. Idaho may share a state-line with Utah, but it's appalling when Idaho starts taking its P's and Q's from Utah's "public lands in states' hands" power-play legislation. The Idaho legislature sees public lands as Idaho's economic fix. More timber harvests, mineral leases and grazing permits will supposedly equal better education for our children, and more money for the state health and welfare system. In actuality, large parcels of federal landscapes could be sold to private industries for pure profit.

If Idaho were to have its way, I couldn't rightfully backpack across once-public lands and accept ecological degradation for the sake of social welfare, corporate welfare, and inadequate educational systems. All of these systems are inexcusably suppressed by our very legislative body already, and this is their way out of it!

Ecological and social existence is unsustainable in an extractive driven state. Intact landscapes, wildlife abundance, and the ability to traverse roadless country makes the public lands experience whole. The American public, if they only knew Clearwater country, would advocate for the same public lands protections, administered by the federal government.

--Ashley Lipscomb Moscow, Idaho



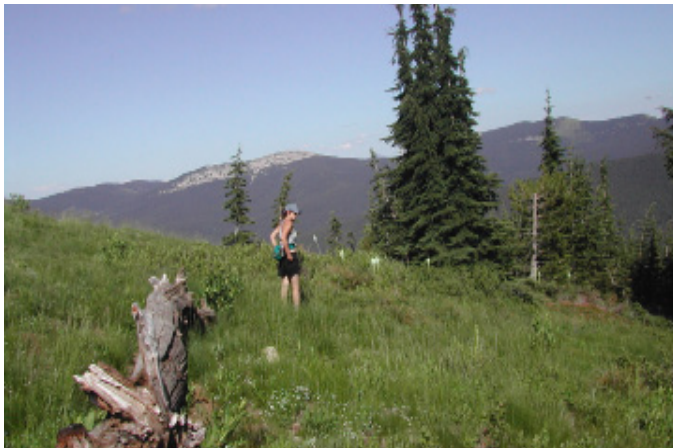
Public Lands Provide Families With Playgrounds

Bonnie Schonefeld Photo Credit



Public Lands Provide Recreation Opportunities

Bonnie Schonefeld Photo Credit



Public Lands Provide Reflection & Relaxation

FOC File Photo



Public Lands Provide Scenic Beauty & Wonder

Fred Rabe Photo Credit

Letters con't.

Well, they were originally designated Public Lands. They said they were yours. Must've meant something, right? Not a lot, though, because the sly old white men who named them were the same frauds who nobly declared all men equal, then murdered the natives and enslaved the blacks while lustily breeding bastards on their women.

In both cases they dreamed up names to keep you in the dark while they had their way, economically and otherwise, and in the case of "Public Lands", they began to steal it from you hand-over-fist as soon as they named it.

They kept at it, refining techniques, and when blatant, red-handed theft of huge swathes of "our" land by railroads, banks and other swindlers began to stink in the nostrils of citizens, they deodorized it by dreaming up "Multiple Use".

According to that lulu of a flim-flam doctrine, all uses of Public Lands are equal, any and everywhere. Stealing a forest is as worthy as saving it; dynamiting a mountain as valid as camping on it; and cows have as much right to fill a wild river with shit as trout have to live in it.

So, this land is your land? Dream on, pilgrim. The contest between Big Money and people never was one. We lost before we knew it.

Those same sly old white guys are still in the saddle, stealing us blind and enjoying the 1%ers privilege of doing it. Though they come in all colors now, they have one thing in common: the blackness of their hearts.

--Paul Edwards Helena, Montana



Attempts To Steal The Commons Is Nothing New

FOC File Photo

Adios National Forests; Adios Public Lands: Celebrating Public Lands In Trying Times

Gary Macfarlane

It is clear that American citizens love public lands, as the articles in this newsletter attest. Further, the fight over the Lochsa Land Exchange shows how much local citizens value their national forests. People of all political perspectives, who enjoy the national forests in many different ways, have come out against that exchange, opting instead for a purchase, so that valuable public land is not lost to privatization in an exchange.

Contrast this with the state legislature's attempt to steal public lands. During the last session, the legislature passed a resolution asking the federal government to transfer public lands to Idaho. The Idaho Department of Lands director did some "back of a napkin" accounting that suggested it could work. Of course, it won't—think firefighting costs—but that was just his political (read dishonest) response.

In the next session, Idaho may follow Utah's bad example and pass legislation demanding the theft of public lands, rather than sticking with the existing resolution. These stupid efforts never die and are an avenue for anti-conservation interests to get more subsidized commodity production off public lands.

Similarly, the Idaho delegation, though cautiously, seems implicitly to support such a move. The Idaho Statesman noted this, regarding the senior member of the delegation:

U.S. Sen. Mike Crapo of Idaho said getting Congress to approve transferring federal lands to western states would be difficult but not out of the question. "Allowing states to manage federal lands would be more likely to get a positive hearing in Congress," he said.

Crapo's agenda to have the state and local interests take control of federal public lands is being accomplished with efforts like the Clearwater Basin Collaborative. Sadly, those groups that support the collaborative are every bit as guilty of trying to turn over federal public lands to state and local interests, as the firebreathers in the state legislature. Further, by working with someone who supports giving away public land, even if only implicitly, shows a lack of judgment. The fact that Crapo didn't collaborate with democrats in the US Senate on a whole host of recent legislative issues also suggests he only collaborates when he can game the system.

If that ain't enough, the conservation community

largely applauded a candidate for the Secretary of the Interior Department who represents corporate America. Sure, Sally Jewell is from a big outdoor gear retailer (as well as having represented the oil and gas industry), but that is precisely the problem—the marketizing and commodifying of public lands. It is not a matter of arbitrating between the oil and gas industry, on one hand, and the outdoor gear industry, on the other. It is not a question of choosing which corporate sponsor to fund a national park nature trail. It is not a balancing act between serving commercial interests deriving wealth from Native Lands, and honoring the public trust to Indian Tribes by making more transparent the inscrutable royalty accounting process. These federal trust responsibilities should be inviolate.

The Secretary of the Interior must represent the broad public interest—living human citizens and the rest of creation that depend on our nation's incredible heritage of public lands. It is a question of championing the very ideas of public space, shared values, democratic principles, and a public commons—as well as the integrity of the functioning natural systems upon which all life depends. The drive to quantify and monetize all values in our society obscures the enduring, intrinsic value of our public land. Representative Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) would have been a far better choice for Interior Secretary.

Past issues of the Defender have been full of warnings that document a trend toward the commodification, marketization and eventual privatization of national forests and public lands. This is occurring regardless of which administration is in power (see also www.wildwilderness.org and www.westernlands.org for more information). The problem is that the conservation community has either been complicit or not very effective in stemming this rush toward privatization of public lands.

We need to redouble our efforts. The conservation movement as a whole has not been effective in doing what it has done in the past decades—keeping public lands public. In fact, some organizations have acted in counter-productive ways.

At the same time, we also need to celebrate public lands. Visit them while there is still the ability for citizens to do so without paying exorbitant fees. Rejoice in the raging Lochsa River. Climb the peaks of the Bitterroots. Catch a glimpse of a wolverine on Monroe Butte, deep within the Weitas (proposed wilderness), or see the flash of the bull trout as it torpedoes in the Selway. And, keep fighting for all things wild. Public lands are the only hope for wildness to survive. Besides, being outside reinvigorates us so we can be more effective in protecting the wild places we all love.



In Memorium

Eugene (Gene) Rosa, distinguished professor, Moscow resident and FOC member passed away of cancer earlier this year surrounded by his family in Moscow. He was a brilliant sociologist at Washington State University and focused on pressing environmental problems. He pioneered sociological research into risk and applied it to environmental issues. He was the Edward R. Meyer Distinguished Professor of Natural Resource and Environmental Policy at Washington State University. He was a very generous person, he always acknowledged the contributions of others, and he was both a patron and creator of art. This Renaissance man will be sorely missed.

**We would like to thank
the foundations that
continue to
support our work:**

**Norcross
Lookout Foundation
New Land Foundation
Community Foundation
of New Jersey/
Robert L. Crowell Fund**

**We would like to thank University of Idaho
student Reba Eggert for doing an excellent job
compiling the 2012 Clearwater Basin Wildland
Fire Assessment Report. Have a great summer!**



Join Us In June For A North Fork Clearwater Camping Trip With Great Old Broads For Wilderness
FOC File Photo

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NORTH FORK CAMPING & HIKING WITH
GREAT OLD BROADS FOR WILDERNESS

June 28-30

BRING FOOD, DRINK AND GEAR
CALL FOR CARPOOLING

3RD ANNUAL HOT SUMMER DAYS BBQ
EAST CITY PARK, MOSCOW

August 30

VEGGIE BURGERS, HOT DOGS PROVIDED
BRING SUPPLEMENTAL DISH, DRINKS

COASTAL DISJUNCT EXPLORATORY SEMINAR
W/ PALOUSE-GROUP SIERRA CLUB

September 6-8

CAMPING AT AQUARIUS CAMPGROUND
HIKING, PLANT IDENTIFICATION, INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMMING

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