



BOB MARSHALL WILDERNESS COMPLEX HIGHLIGHTS

SPRING 2002

ISSUE NO. 12

2001 IN REVIEW

by Daina Bambe

It's hard to believe that another year has passed – time flies by so quickly anymore, it is almost impossible to keep up with things at this neck breaking pace. I would like to thank all of you who continue to play an active role in the stewardship of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex! We, as managers, need your involvement, your support, and your honest feedback in order to manage this unique and precious resource for this and future generations.

I would like to invite all of you to the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex Annual Meeting (formerly known as the LAC meeting) that will be held on April 13th in Missoula. For those of you who would like to show up the day before, we are planning a social/dinner meeting at the Sizzler restaurant (3611 Brooks) on Friday from 6:30 to 9:00 pm (cost for dinner will be between \$8.50 and \$12.50 – depending on what you order from the buffet). It will be a great opportunity to chat with folks one-on-one and after dinner there will be a slide show (organized by Smoke Elser) on “The Bob”. On Saturday, the meeting will be held out at the Northern Rockies Training Center, located at the Missoula Smokejumper Base, from 9 am to 3 pm. One of the issues that we do struggle with is trying to stimulate public enthusiasm, interest, and involvement in all aspects of management of the complex, from LAC monitoring to trail projects, to forest plan revision. We talked about this at last year's annual meeting. This year I would like to challenge each and every one of you to not only attend the meeting but also to bring at least one

friend with you! *We will be sending out a registration form in the next week or so that will have the agenda for Saturday and details as to food arrangements. Look for it in your mailbox!*

It appears that our budget in trails this year is holding its own and the recreation (including wilderness) budget is up from last year. That's great news although we still have not reached parity with historic funding levels because of the chronic yearly reductions in budget that we had experienced over prior years (some forests were down 15% in their recreation budgets last year alone!). During this time of budget shortfall we were able to stay afloat through the valuable contributions of our volunteers (maintaining trails, rehabilitating campsites, and the like) in addition to programs like Fee Demo that have aided the Forest Service in keeping a summer temporary workforce out on the ground while also funding projects such as noxious weed control, road maintenance, toilets and parking facilities just to name a few.

Last year I mentioned that there were several proposals that were being considered to restructure our wilderness organization to include wilderness stewards (or coordinators) that would be assigned full time to a wilderness or series of wilderness areas as well as increasing the number of wilderness field positions. Neither one of these strategies has been implemented as of yet. However, with the restoration of some of the funding levels in our recreation and trails programs we appear to be progressing towards more realistic staffing levels. For the first time in many years I have seen a number of permanent (summer seasonal) employment opportunities throughout the

Forest Service in wilderness, recreation, and trails open up for recruitment. As a District Ranger, I cannot describe how important it is to be able to have wilderness ranger and trail crew leader positions filled with permanent summer staff thereby providing continuity and consistency to our programs. It's great to see things in an upward trend!

If you have any questions or would just like to chat about issues within the complex, please feel free to contact me here at the Lincoln Ranger District at (406) 362-4265. I hope you have a great year enjoying the nation's (your) wilderness treasures!



THE LINCOLN RANGER DISTRICT
2001 SEASON
by Ernie Lundberg

The 2001 season began in May when we filled two Permanent Seasonal positions. Casey Burns was hired on as our Trail Crew Foreman and Mark Kuhlman as the Wilderness Ranger; it is great to have them aboard. The trail crew reported to work at the end of May, along with our SCA volunteer, Vanessa Parker Geismann.

Vanessa worked as the assistant Wilderness Ranger. Her duties included visitor contacts, providing information, LNT education, and collecting data for LAC. Mark and Vanessa were able to inventory 30% of the mapped campsites.

The crew spent most of June in training, but they escaped whenever possible to saddle up and clear trails. Casey and crew cleared several miles of trail over the summer. Many of the trails in the burn area required clearing several times. The crew was also able to accomplish some great work on the Capitol Investment projects.

There were also some great learning opportunities for the crew. One such opportunity was the traditional practice of horse logging. With help from one of our local horse loggers, Ward Kemmer, the trail crew obtained some experience in log skidding with our mules, Cam and Comet.

The trail crew received a great deal of help on trail projects and clearing from volunteer organizations. One of our larger volunteer organizations is the Bob Marshall Foundation (BMF). Each year, Carla Cline pulls all the crews together and matches them with suitable projects throughout the Bob Complex. Last summer, we were fortunate enough to have BMF crews assist with three projects on the Lincoln District.

The first BMF crew to arrive on the second week of June was the Wilderness Treatment Center Crew. Their project was to cut trees along the Middle Fork Trail # 479. The trees were regenerated from the 1988 Canyon Creek Fire. Some trees were large enough to create hazards to horseback riders. Conditions had become difficult for pack stock as well, bumping and catching packs. The BMF crew did an excellent job removing trees within four feet of the trail and scattering the debris.

The BMF arrived again in the week of July 7th to clear the Arrastra Creek Trail. They have assumed this duty for the past few years. The cleared trail made for a much more enjoyable experience on the Helena Mangers ride. Brett Todd, the Meadow Creek outfitter, also complimented the crew on their work.

A second BMF, Wilderness Treatment Crew arrived the last week of August to finish the Upper Landers Trail #479. The crew cleared and clipped the trees on the remainder of the trail to Black Tail Pass.

We also had a very entertaining group of retired smokejumpers (courtesy of the BMF) that

volunteered their services. These folks had many an exciting tale to tell. Their tales exposed the young trail crew to a very entertaining, yet educational aspect of Forest Service history. The smokejumpers cleaned and installed over 100 water diversion structures on the Mainline and Lone Mountain Trails. They also maintained all the fences around the Indian Meadows Administrative Site.

We had one final group, the 9-Mile Pack Train, come rolling in the last week of September. We have been fortunate to have the team assist us with the packing of supplies and equipment needed for the trails and range programs in the Wilderness. Bob and Mark accomplish a great deal of work while on the district, and they are also willing to give us a great deal of advice on packing and stock handling techniques. In 2001, the Pack Train Board came to Indian Meadows to hold a meeting and see the Pack Train in action. We were happy to provide the Indian Meadows facility for their use.

The Charlie Russell Back Country Horseman (BCH) adopted a 12-mile section of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) between Rogers Pass and Flesher Pass. Each year in mid June they ride this trail, clear it and maintain the signs. Last season, the group arrived the first week of July and worked on the trails around Indian Meadows. The past few years' projects have involved rebuilding puncheons on the Mainline Trail #481. The crew also crowned 600 feet of turnpike.

Our volunteer groups help keep the trails safe and enjoyable for all. Most folks are not aware of the tremendous amount of work these volunteers do to keep the trail open for everyone. We, at the Lincoln Ranger District, want to extend our thanks to the volunteers for all their hard work.

Over the past two years, we have been working to establish a conservation education program on the Lincoln Ranger District. The initial stages of this

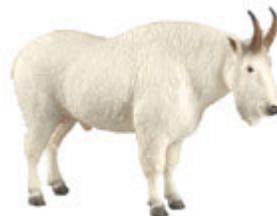
project have been very successful. The Helena National Forest acquired a FireWorks trunk in January; over 100 students and teachers in the Lincoln, Helmville, and Ovando schools, as well as the local Girl Scout troop have used the trunk. We are currently working with the Girl Scouts in Leave No Trace outdoor skills training, and coordinating with them to organize an event for National Trails Day in June. The Lincoln Ranger District, Blackfoot Challenge and Powell County Extension office worked together to organize a Youth Field Day for fifth and sixth graders in the Blackfoot Valley last May. About 120 students attended this event at the Monture Ranger Station. We had such positive feedback that we will hold the event again this spring on May 22.

The 2001 season was one of tremendous progress, but we are already anticipating a great 2002 season filled with new challenges, learning experience, progress, and accomplishments.



Scapegoat Anniversary

The Scapegoat Wilderness Area will be celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2002. The Lincoln Ranger District and Helena Forest Foundation are working with Monte Dolack to develop a print commemorating this event. Monte has agreed to do some limited edition prints that will be available through the Forest Service offices.



ROCKY MOUNTAIN RANGER DISTRICT

Volunteer Program

As our Volunteer/Partnership program accomplishment table reflects, volunteer groups were “busy in the Bob”, Scapegoat and backcountry of the Rocky Mountain Front this summer conducting trail maintenance as well as trail reconstruction work, and assisting with maintenance at administrative sites and trailheads. A thank you is extended to all volunteers who participated in projects on the district this last field season. Your contribution to our wilderness, recreation and trail programs is greatly appreciated.

The Bob Marshall Foundation, Eastslope Backcountry Horsemen, and Great Falls Montana Conservation Corp are all planning volunteer projects for this field season. These organizations received National Recreation Trail grant funding for project work they completed this summer and have submitted projects for the 2002 and 2003 seasons.

The Continental Divide Trail Association is jointly sponsoring a weed pulling project with the Bob Marshall Foundation. The CDTA is also looking for two volunteers to assist a wilderness ranger on the district posting and installing signs along the CDT in the Badger Two Medicine and Scapegoat. Option to work one or two 10-day hitches in July or August. If interested contact us at the district or call 1800 909 CDTA.

	DATE	VOLUNTEERS	PROJECT
*	May 12	ESBCH	Middle Fork Teton feed bunk and loading dock
*	May 26-28	ESBCH	Birch Creek trails, Blind Tubby #171, North Fork Teton #107
	June 1-3	BMF, WTC #13	Mettler Coulee #172, Jennings Creek #118
*	June 9	ESBCH	South Fork corral
*	June 15-17	ESBCH	Cabin Creek pasture fence, Moose Creek #131
	June 17-28	BMF, WTC #1	Woods Creek #170
	June 18-22	Regional trail crew	Pretty Prairie project
	June 23-July 2	BMF, WTC #2	Lost Cabin #254
	July 6-26	BMF, WTC #3	Headquarters #165, Rock Creek #111, Moose Ridge
	July 11-19	NRPT	Grayling Reintroduction (North Fork Sun River and Gates Park)

			w/ MT FWP
*	July 13-15	ESBCH	Wrong Creek Cabin fence, Wrong Ridge #117
*	July 15-21	BMF, NSA #1	Renshaw Creek #243, Fairview Creek #204, Benchmark Creek #256, Renshaw Lake #236
	July 15-21	BMF, NSA #2	Hannan Gulch Fence work and barn maintenance
	July 13-Aug 2	BMF, WTC #4	Three Sisters #447, Moose Ridge
*	July 22-28	BMF, NSA #6	Beartop Lookout #129
*	July 23-Aug 2	MCC	Dearborn project #206, Whitetail #218, Carmichael Basin #235
*	July 21-27	BMF, EXP #3	South Fork Sun River turnpikes #202
*	July 27-29	ESBCH	Gates Park pasture fence
	July 27-29	BMF #8	South Fork Sun River noxious weed pulling (CDTA Grant)
*	Aug 9-12	BMF #9	Dearborn River #206
*	Aug 12-18	BMF, Wilderness Volunteers	North Fork Sun River #110
	Aug 29-Sept 11	BMF, WTC #6A	Dearborn #206, Lost Cabin #254, Elk Creek #205
*	Aug 31-Sept 3	ESBCH	Badger/Two Medicine corral
*	Sept 8-27	BMF, WTC #7	Moose Ridge, South Wall Trail #175
	Sept 17-21	RO retirees	Gates Park root cellar roof
*	Sept 17-27	MCC	Weasel Creek project #245

Legend

MCC – Montana Conservation Corp

BMF – Bob Marshall Foundation

ESBCH – Eastslope Backcountry Horsemen

CMRCH – Charlie Russell Back Country Horsemen

NRPT – Northern Region Pack Train

WTC – Wilderness Treatment Center

NSA – National Smokejumper Association

* NRT – National Recreation Trail Grant Projects

Trail Maintenance

Between late May and mid September, two 5-person crews maintained approximately 850-900 miles of trail from Marias Pass to Rogers Pass.



Trail Reconstruction

Eight major projects were completed during the 2001 field season. Work ranged from water bar and drain dip construction, to retreading, bridge repair and replacement, turnpike construction, rock cribbing and extensive brushing along trails within the 88 Gates Park Fire.

Two crews, one 6-person heavy construction crew, and one 4-person roving reconstruction crew worked from mid May through mid September. The following table lists their project accomplishments.

ROCKY MTN. RANGER DISTRICT TRAIL RECONSTRUCTION CREW 2001 PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS	
<i>TRAILS</i>	<i>WORK ACCOMPLISHED</i>
S. Fork Sun River Trail 202/CDT	Bridge cap replacement & tower replacement on S. Fork Sun suspension bridge
N. Fork Sun River Trail 110	Bridge cap replacement work on N. Fork Sun suspension bridge
N. Fork Sun Trail 110/CDT	Bridge & turnpike work on Sun River Pass
Route Creek Trail 108	Reroute, brushing, turnpikes & bridge replacement work
S. Fork Sun River Trail 202	Turnpike construction
Green Fork Trail 228	Reroutes, bridge & turnpike construction
N. Fork Sun River 110	Reroutes, turnpikes, bridges & brushing from Lick Creek north to Wrong Creek
Beartop Lookout Trail 129	Puncheon bridge construction
*On several of these projects volunteers assisted our crews	

Gibson Lake Trail Reconstruction Contract

In addition to the above listed projects, the Gibson Lake Trail Reconstruction Project Contract on North Fork Sun River Trail 201 was partially completed. This summer, the contractor will work on completing the reconstruction project between the period of June 1 and July 30. For construction and access, the Contractor may close any portion of the trail to public access between 0800 and 1700, Monday through Friday. At all other times, evenings, weekends, including holidays, the trail will be kept open to the public. The trailhead will be signed when the trail is closed. If you plan to make a trip into the Bob and utilize the Gibson Lake Trail during June or July, please contact the Rocky Mountain Ranger District (406)466-5341 or the Augusta Information Station at (406)562-3247

for the current status of the trail project and specific information on anticipated trail closures.

Trail Condition Surveys

During most of the summer, one district employee was hiking or riding the Continental Divide Trail between Marias Pass and Blacktail (including portions on the Lincoln and Spotted Bear Districts) collecting information on trail conditions and GPS location data.



ROCKY MTN. RANGER DISTRICT PROPOSED TRAIL RECONSTRUCTION 2002 SEASON	
<i>TRAILS</i>	<i>WORK PROPOSED</i>
N. Fork Sun, Gates Park. Lick Creek/110	Turnpike & puncheon
S. Fork Badger/104	Switchback construction
Moose Creek Rock Removal/131	Reroute/blasting
Prairie Creek/262	Switchback reconstruction
N. Fork Dupuyer/124	Reroute/puncheon
CDT Elk Calf Mtn./137	Reconstruction/rerouts/\$ carryover
CDT S. Wall Phase I (Larch)/194	Switchback reconstruction
CDT Spot Retreading/206	Heavy spot retreading/tread repair
CDT W. Fork Sun Packbridge RP/202	Replace worn running plank
CDT Sun River Turnpike Recrwn/202	Turnpike recrowning
S. Fork Sun Cutoff (CDT access)/255	Turnpike construction
S. Fork Sun River/201 Medicine Springs Packbridge	Replace worn running planks

Wilderness Program

Approximately 25% of our wilderness campsites were inventoried for impacts and resource condition recorded. Social encounter monitoring was completed during visitor contact patrols by our staff of 5 seasonals and 1 permanent employee.

Fire prevention work was completed during the time leading up to and during fire restrictions.

Facilities Program

Major facilities projects were completed at Greenfork, Benchmark, Hannan Gulch, Badger, Gates Park and Wrong Creek Cabins. The work was varied in scope and complexity and was supported by numerous volunteer groups and individuals. The East Slope Backcountry Horsemen participated in two trailhead improvement projects. The club donated the materials and provided the labor to build a new pipe corral for the general public at the South Fork Teton Trailhead and rebuilt feedbunks and loading ramp at the Middle Fork Teton Trailhead.

Conservation Education/Outreach

The district's conservation education program is conducted in partnerships with The Nature Conservancy, The Boone & Crockett Club, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, MSU Extension Office, Teton Conservation District, Natural Resource Conservation Service and GLOBE. The district coordinated the annual Hannan Field Day for area 6th graders, and participated with partners in the Creeks and Critters field trip for local 4th graders.

The district continues to have the Wilderness and Land Ethics Box (K-8) available for teachers. The district is also offering the Fireworks Trunk (K-12) which contains experiments, classroom activities and field activities based on the important role of fire as a natural process. By mid March the Wilderness and Land Ethics Box will be available for High School students. The trunks are designed to promote awareness and appreciation of cultural, environmental and experiential values of wilderness. Call the district office for availability and reservations.

The Lewis and Clark National Forest hosts a website at:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r1lewisclark/index.htm>. The

district is currently working on a website that will link to the Forest website. It is expected to be up and running by May.



Northern Region Trail Crew Gets Annual Workout

By John Favro, Regional Office

For quite a few years, the Northern Region has hosted a volunteer trail crew made up of Forest Service retirees and a few folks from our office. Steve Morton, former regional wilderness and outfitter/guide program manager, organized this annual trek until he retired last year. Steve is now a working member of the group, and John Favro has taken over as organizer.

Each spring, one lucky district is selected to have up to ten volunteers travel to a backcountry location and work a section of trail. Lucky is truly the word to use for the benefiting district as the crew works extremely hard for five days. They also bring several hundred years of trail experience to each project.

Last summer, the Northern Region Trail Crew was comprised of Wendell Beardsley, Kirk Thompson, John Favro, Steve Morton, Tom Rhodes, Lisa Thompson, Chuck Spoon, Walt Tomasak and Kieth Granrud. They set up base camp at Pretty Prairie Cabin, located on the Rocky Mountain Ranger District, in the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

The crew worked along Prairie Creek, over to Goat Creek and back to the Sun River. This is a distance of about 12 miles, with a 3,000-foot climb to the halfway point. Portions of the trail had not been worked for many years, so the crew spent lots of time brushing and running the misery whip. They also laid out a new route for the trail to reroute around the straight-up climb to the summit.

Lisa Thompson provided many wonderful meals during the week while the crew, in the spirit of Forest Service retirees everywhere, held forth on

past fires and back country trips, and solved all of the problems the agency has ever faced.

The Region thanks these volunteers and we hope to see the crew back this spring.



Trail Crew relaxing after a 20-mile work/hike day trip. Left to right beginning to the left of the empty chair: John Favro, Tom Rhodes, Kieth Granrud, Wendell Beardsley, Walt Tomasak, Chuck Spoon, Kirk and Lisa Thompson.



Regional Trail Crew at
Pretty Prairie Cabin

workshop was held at the Boone and Crockett Club's new educational facility, Rasmuson Conservation Center, at their Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch near Choteau.

A total of 25 science teachers attended the sessions put on by Rocky Mountain Ranger District staff Patti Johnston, Brad McBratney, Jim Forrest, and Jill Shoemaker. Also attending were Forest Service employees Demarcus Ross and Marianne Zadra with the Lewis and Clark National Forest.

Bill Peterson directed the workshop. Bill is a retired science teacher who contracts with the Forest Service and volunteers his time encouraging student interest in science. He has a long association with GLOBE (Global Learning & Observations to Benefit the Environment), a NASA program based on earth system science, and recruits science teachers to join the program.

GLOBE attracts students because of the hands-on activities of gathering data through air, water, soil and vegetation monitoring. Orbiting satellites then share this data with kids all over the world via the Internet. The data can be used for comparisons for years to come. The two-day GLOBE session included weather and water protocols, land cover GPS and soil protocols.

Consultant Duncan Lutes and fire ecologist Jane Kapler-Smith with the Rocky Mountain Research Station in Missoula presented a lesson in fire fuel protocols. The remaining time was devoted to training in use of the hands-on materials from the Wilderness and FireWorks trunks.

Teachers were excited by what they learned and eager to take their knowledge back to their students. R1 staff expertise in wilderness education and fire ecology was put to perfect use!

Teachers Applaud Workshop

by Marianne Zadra, Lewis & Clark National Forest

Montana's Rocky Mountain Front was the spectacular setting for a Forest Service-sponsored training session for science teachers July 9-16. The

SEELEY LAKE RANGER DISTRICT

2001 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Trail Maintenance-All primary and secondary trails were cleared and received basic maintenance. Extra funding from the Regional Office specifically allocated for backlog maintenance

enabled us to contract out the opening of Cabin Creek, Tobacco Valley and Dabrota trails. These three trails are in the 1988 Canyon Fire area and had not been cleared since 1997. They were virtually impassable. Brett Todd was awarded the contract and did an outstanding job! A four-person Forest Service trail crew was financed from June 1 through the September 1st.

Trail Capital Investment- (reconstruction or new construction)- Contract crews completed reconstruction of the Pyramid Pass and Dunham Creek Trails this year. The Montana Conservation Corps constructed a new segment of trail on the Middle Fork of Monture trail. This project reduced a 40% grade and rerouted the trail away from Tom Ide's base camp facilities. Forest Service crews spent considerable time on Monture Creek, Spread Mountain, Center Creek, and Center Ridge trails cutting snags, retreading undermined trail sections and installing drainage structures to reduce the impacts of the 2000 Monture/Spread Fires. The entire Lodgepole trail was severely burned by the Birk Fire. Center Ridge trail was completely obliterated in some sections by the Monture Fire. Work remains to be done this spring before the trails will be useable.



Noxious Weed Treatment-All trailheads leading into the BMWC were given high priority for control and were sprayed with herbicides. The North Fork Blackfoot trail to the Cabin was given special attention and treated numerous times as the unwanted vegetation emerged. Forest Service crews regularly treat isolated weed patches they find with a pelletized herbicide (Dicamba). Spotted knapweed, yellow toadflax, musk thistle,

bull thistle, Canada thistle, mullien, common tansy and sulfur cinquefoil were all found to one degree or another along the trails and campsites. Canada thistle has spread beyond the trail sides and we have little hope of ever eradicating this species. Control efforts will continue along trails and in campsites.

Campsite Restoration and LAC Inventory-No campsite restoration or inventories were conducted during 2001.

Wilderness Education- Local 6th graders were given presentations in "No Trace" camping and "Leave No Weeds" by Forest Service employees.

Outfitter Fee Demo- A four-person trail crew was financed for a two-week period conducting trail maintenance activities in the Scapegoat Wilderness.

Volunteers-The Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation project, comprised of a retired smoke jumpers group, reopened portions of the Blackfoot Divide that had been logged in for several years. Another project was cancelled in the Camp Pass Area due to active fires. Several individuals volunteered time and worked side-by-side with the trail crew at various times throughout the summer. The Whitetail Ranch Crew cut hundreds of logs across the North Fork of the Blackfoot Trail throughout the season.



2002 PLANS

Trail Maintenance-The District plans to clear all primary and secondary trails this coming season. The clearing and reopening of the Driftwood Lake trail between Cabin Creek and the North Fork trail is being analyzed. Some users would prefer to see this trail abandoned, others would prefer it be opened back up to accommodate stock, and others would like to see it maintained only to a hikers standard. We will be receiving comments on this

project until March or April. We plan on having a 4-person trail crew working from June 1- mid September. Several miles of trail maintenance will also be awarded to contractors.

Trail Capital Investment (reconstruction or new construction)- Trail rehabilitation work on those trails affected by the last two seasons of fire will continue again this year. The Wedge Creek pack Bridge on Monture Creek is scheduled to be replaced this summer. New running planks, handrails and curb logs will be replaced on the Smokes and North Fork Cabin Bridges. Hopefully we can reconstruct the trail from the North Fork Trailhead to the Danaher this coming summer. General tread work and drainage are the main items that need to be completed. A better high water crossing at cabin creek and repairs the Red Cliff Bridge are being analyzed. .

Noxious Weed Treatment- The 2000 and 2001 burn areas, and the trailheads and trails leading to those burns, will be our main focus for weed control. A concentrated effort to treat weeds from the North fork trailhead to the Danaher by will also be completed in conjunction with trail reconstruction efforts.

Public Contacts/patrol, Campsite Restoration and Campsite LAC Inventory-Tentative plans are to utilize outfitter/fee demo dollars and hire a 2 person backpack crew to conduct LAC inventories, treat weeds and do LAC Campsite inventories.

Wilderness Education – Presentations to local 6th graders on preventing the spread of weeds, and “No Trace “ camping is planned for this coming season.

Outfitter Fee Demo- Besides financing a 2 person campsite restoration/ weed control crew we plan to bury the waterlines and install a toilet at the Monture Outfitter corrals.

Volunteers-The Bob Marshall foundation is in the process of recruiting volunteer groups and

individuals to work on several district projects. Organizers for the Passport in Time (PIT) are currently recruiting volunteers at the national level to spent 10 days re-thinking, log oiling, and rebuilding the front porch at the Monture Guard station



Fire Season 2001

Bob Marshall/Great Bear Wilderness

By Steve Wirt

This years fire season started out a little slower than last year however, the 2001 fire season was unusually long, extending well into the month of October. It seemed as though fall would never arrive. With significant moisture being late and the month of September being abnormally dry, the wilderness fires continued to burn on into October. This is not what we expected, or perhaps what we wanted. When you're managing wilderness, or any system for that matter where natural processes are always at work, you learn to take what you get and expect the unexpected. While this season was longer, perhaps, than normal it did not go beyond the latest historical season ending event of October 10th but actually came at just that precise time.

Season Summary

Typically, our fire season lasts about six to eight weeks, normally starting around July 15 and ending sometime in the first week or two of September. This year our first fire started on August 4 and continued to burn until the season ending rain event of October 10.

The following table lists those fires in the Great Bear and Bob Marshall Wilderness Areas for the 2001 fire season for the Flathead National Forest.

Number of fires and total acres by type of fire.

Total Fire Starts	Lightning Caused	Person Caused	Sup-pressed	Approv- ed Fire Use	Fire Use Acres	Total Acres
14	12	2	8	6	20, 211	20, 487



Rehab Work

Fire name, start date & size.

<i>Fire Name</i>	<i>Ranger District/ Wilderness</i>	<i>Date Started</i>	<i>Acres Burned</i>
Hodag	SB/BM	6/1/01	4
Hodag 2	SB/BM	6/1/01	1
Castle	HH/GB	7/25/01	1
Cannon	SB/BM	8/4/01	1,974
Bergsicker, Long, Toboggan	HH/GB	8/14/01	8,557
Crossover	SB/BM	8/15/018	.1

<i>Fire Name</i>	<i>Ranger District/ Wilderness</i>	<i>Date Started</i>	<i>Acres Burned</i>
Youngs Mtn	SB/BM	8/15/01	.1
Youngs Ridge	SB/BM	8/18/01	.1
Sunburst	SB/BM	8/16/01	.1
Ear	HH/GB	8/18/01	275
Twin Creek	SB/BM	9/4/01	3
*Birk	SB/BM	9/13/01	9,674

Note:*the Birk fire; a portion of this fire burned on the Lolo NF.

Fire Use= Castle, Cannon, Bergsicker, Long, Toboggan & Birk.

SB-Spotted Bear RD

HH-Hungry Horse RD

BM-Bob Marshall Wilderness

GM-Great Bear Wilderness

Please feel to contact me (Steve Wirt) at Hungry Horse 406-387-3800 or at Spotted Bear after May 15 (406-758-5376) for more of the story or on other questions you have on the BMWC wildland fire program.

During the summer of 2001, volunteers for the Bob Marshall Foundation and the U.S. Forest Service worked on two pre-rehabilitation site evaluation projects and two campsite rehabilitation projects within the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

The Shaw Cabin site evaluation project provided input to Forest Service managers regarding the need for future rehabilitation at Shirttail Park and Shoestring, both along Gordon Creek, and at Koessler Lake. Five volunteers participated in this project. The volunteers also offered to clean up hay and manure from campsites near Shaw Cabin and to cut firewood for the cabin.

A similar site evaluation project for Big River Meadows involved one volunteer. This project also identified future seed collection sites for native plants growing in the area. Once the seeds are collected, they will be grown into plants to use for campsite rehabilitation in Big River Meadows.

Campsite rehabilitation projects took place in late August and early September at Sunburst Lake and Hodag Flats (near Black Bear Cabin). During the Sunburst Lake rehab project, five volunteers, four Forest Service employees, and two Bob Marshall Foundation employees spent three days planting 430 native plants, defining a trail to desired campsites, and attempting to discourage campers from using one campsite that has received heavy use in the past that damaged trees, plants, and soil. Four volunteers helped three Forest Service employees with the Hodag Flats project. The work here involved discouraging overnight stock use at one small river site and rehab work at a nearby stock containment area. The river site will still support backpackers or river floaters, and stock users can still take their stock to the river for water.

The rehab work in the stock containment area included discouraging stock users from tying stock to trees and encouraging them to use a highline for stock. Native forbs and grasses collected last year on site were used to help rehabilitate these two areas.

Future work will include seed collections and initial rehab for Big River Meadows and the Shaw Cabin areas, and continued rehab to Sunburst Lake and Hodag Flats.



Climbing up the trail towards Gordon Pass, catching glimpses of golden larches amongst the swirling fog and snow, I think I must be the most fortunate person on earth. This is the final day of my first trip into the Bob Marshall Wilderness in my new capacity as the Wilderness, Wild and Scenic Rivers and Outfitter Program Leader for the Northern Region. I spent this six-day trip observing the mosaic created by years of natural fires, visiting with outfitters and their clients, and spending a night at one of the Forest Service's crown jewel administrative sites, Big Prairie.

I have been most fortunate to have had great jobs in my 20+ years with the Forest Service. I've worked in wilderness management in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness in the Washington Cascades and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in Northern Minnesota. Most recently, I spent over seven years with the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center in Missoula. During my years at the Carhart Center it became clear to me that some of the finest wilderness and wilderness managers in the Nation were right here in the Northern Region. That is reaffirmed with every trip I take.

One of the nice things about this job is that I inherited a program that is in really good shape. In spite of budget woes and impossible workloads, the people I visit with are passionate about their jobs and the resource. The districts have managed to maintain solid programs on a shoestring.

My hope over the next few years is to revitalize the region's wilderness education program, continue to build a cadre of folks competent in the use of traditional tools, and facilitate sharing expertise around the region. And, of course, I plan to continue to visit and enjoy the Nation's finest Wilderness areas!

Chris Ryan



Big Sky Bible Camp

The Big Sky Bible Camp (BSBC), a nondenominational group, is located three miles northeast of Bigfork, Montana. Interest in volunteer work on National Forest Land was a result of efforts of Camp Director John Breneman and Activities Staff Leader Dan Lubbers, cabinet-maker of Bozeman, Montana. Both are experienced, outdoor-oriented persons. That interest expanded summer camp activities, which included hiking, rock climbing, bicycle trips on the Flathead and Kootenai Forests and Glacier Park. Water-oriented activities are conducted on the camp's frontage on Peterson Lake.

Initial contact for information and prospective volunteer projects was made in 1994 and through the winter of 1995. Flathead Forest Wilderness Ranger Gordon Ash provided guidance, technical assistance for training, planning, scheduling, logistical support, tools and safety and camp

equipment to get the project underway. That assistance continued from 1994-2001.

Program objectives of BSBC included exposure to work ethics, teamwork, public service, wilderness and natural resource conservation. Ten-day work tour included introduction and training in safe use of hand tools, awareness of major plants in the project areas, background history of National Forest land and Wilderness Areas. Day-to-day hands-on supervision and on-the-job training of crew members was provided by leader Lubbers. Crew size varied between 10 and 14 members. Ages of crew members were between 16 and 18 years, with usually three adults providing leader support.

Funding for the first four years of trail maintenance for subsistence and travel was provided by the Camp. A part of registration fees contributed to the subsistence purchase. The Bob Marshall Foundation assisted with these costs from 1999 through 2001.

1998 (Tr #584 & 13) Harrison Cr, Mid Mt	11.5 mi	1.0mi	1.5mi	300ft	.5 mi
1999 (Tr #220) Black Bear Cr	7.0mi	1.0mi	----	300ft	3.0mi
2000 (Tr #220 & 524) Black Bear	4.0mi	.5mi	1.5mi	800-1000ft	2.5 mi
2001 (Trail #220) Pagoda Mt	2.5mi	.5mi	.25mi	800ft	3.5mi
TOTALS	45.5mi	6.5mi	11.5mi	3500ft	13.5mi

WORK ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Year	Windfall Removal	Brushing		Tread Restore	Identify (lost) Trail (flag)
		Light	Med		
1995 (Tr #103) Mid Cr	5.5 miles	1.0mi	2.5mi	500 ft	2.0 mi
1996 (Tr #220 & 524) Black Bear-Rambler	7.5 mi	2.5mi	3.0mi	1500 ft	2.0 mi
1997 (Tr #103 & 524) Mid Cr, Mtd Mt	7.5 mi	-----	2.5mi	300 ft	.5 mi



Why Leave No Trace?

Almost all of us have heard these three simple words sometime in our lives, especially when we are thinking of favorite outdoor pass-times. LEAVE NO TRACE.... We all seem to know what it means or have an idea of how to practice it...but WHY? As recreational use increases in our favorite outdoor places, we are "loving these places to death!" Who has the responsibility of protecting these areas to make sure we always can use them? All of us do...the need to learn and teach responsible outdoor skills and ethics is more important now than ever. There is no time like the present to take action. Aldo Leopold said "*A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.*"

Leave No Trace Outdoor Skills and Ethics is a national educational program. Its mission is to educate recreational users in the skills and ethics of reducing impacts while recreating in outdoor activities, especially non-motorized recreation. The seven principles of Leave No Trace can be applied anywhere--in remote wilderness, city parks or even your own backyard.

Principles of Leave No Trace

- ◆ Plan Ahead and Prepare
- ◆ Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- ◆ Dispose of Waste Properly
- ◆ Leave What You Find
- ◆ Minimize Campfire Impacts
- ◆ Respect Wildlife
- ◆ Be Considerate of Other Visitors

These seven principles are based on an abiding respect for nature. By educating ourselves and adopting these skills and ethics we will be able to--*Leave No Trace*. So Why Leave No Trace...to quote a famous saying...."because it's the right thing to Do!"

The Leave No Trace message was spread through many programs this past year. Leave No Trace is a common theme in all education programs that are presented throughout the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. Not only at formal education programs but also by the wilderness ranger or trail crewmember meeting a visitor on the trail or in camp. The mere mention of Leave No Trace sparks conversations that lead to an educational message. In this way teaching Leave No Trace is everyone's responsibility.

Examples abound around the Complex of excellent programs such as: Hannan Gulch Education Day on the Rocky Mountain Ranger District, school programs presented from the Lincoln Ranger District, Campground Naturalist programs on Seeley Ranger District and reaching over 1200 students at the Flathead Family Forestry Expo on the Flathead National Forest. All of these

programs have one thing in common: the commitment to spread the Leave No Trace message. A variety of themes and methods are used but the Leave No Trace message comes across loud and clear.

Simple living, adventure, and solitude can still be a part of our outdoor experience. To assure their continued quality character...a few minutes taken to learn and become equipped with the skills and habits of these three simple words...*Leave No Trace*...will enable us all to enjoy these special experiences forever.



Wilderness Walk

Following are 4 proposed Wilderness Walk work projects in the Flathead area. These are proposed by Spotted Bear Ranger District with activities in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. These projects are for the purpose of rehabilitating heavily impacted campsites and collecting local native plant seeds that will be used for future campsite rehab projects. Volunteers need no prior experience in either seed collecting or campsite rehab. Seed collection is not strenuous, but rehab work may involve lifting, bending, and possibly carrying or moving heavy objects, such as rocks or logs. Volunteers will be provided food, cooking needs, and rehab and collecting equipment. Volunteers should expect to hike with their personal packs, shelter, and gear to the project sites described below. A wilderness ranger will meet and assist with the pack/hike in at the trailhead for the projects.

To sign up and get volunteer forms the contact is Carla Cline with the Bob Marshall Foundation at 406-863-5411, or

carla@bobmarshall.org. For specific information on project activities and details, contact Beth Hodder at 406-387-3810.

July 26-28: Black Bear (South Fork of the Bob Marshall Wilderness near Black Bear Cabin)-- Seed collection (trip priority) and campsite rehabilitation at Hodag Flats.

Tentative itinerary:

Friday, July 26: Leave from Meadow Creek trailhead for Black Bear Cabin area.

Saturday, July 27: Collect seed and rehab sites as time allows.

Sunday, July 28: Travel back to Meadow Creek trailhead.

This trip is moderate in difficulty: approximately 200 feet gain in elevation to Black Bear, and 12 miles in hiking distance. A wilderness ranger will meet volunteers at the Meadow Creek trailhead at 8:00 a.m. on July 26. Because it is a 2 and ½ hour trip by dirt road from Hungry Horse, MT to the trailhead, we suggest you arrive at the trailhead the day before and camp on your own. Use of the Guard Station will also be available at Black Bear.

August 15-18: Big River Meadows (Middle Fork of the Bob Marshall Wilderness near the Continental Divide)--Seed collection (trip priority) and campsite rehabilitation.

Tentative itinerary:

Thursday, August 15: Leave from Swift Reservoir trailhead and travel to Sabido Cabin.

Friday, August 16 and Saturday, August 17: Seed collection and campsite rehabilitation.

Sunday, August 18: Leave Sabido Cabin area for Swift Reservoir trailhead.

This trip is strenuous: approximately 1500 feet in elevation gain to Gateway Pass, and 15 miles in distance to Sabido Cabin. A Bob Marshall Foundation representative will meet volunteers at the Swift Reservoir trailhead at 8:00 a.m. on

August 15. Hiking to Sabido Cabin should take all day.

August 23-26: Shaw Cabin area: (South Fork of the Bob Marshall Wilderness on the Gordon Creek Trail 35)-- Seed collection (trip priority) and campsite rehabilitation.

Tentative itinerary:

Friday, August 23: Leave from Owl Creek Packers Camp near Holland Lake. Travel to Shaw Cabin.

Saturday, August 24 and Sunday, July 25: Seed collection and campsite rehabilitation.

Monday, August 26: Travel from Shaw Cabin area to Holland Lake.

This trip is strenuous; approximately 3000 feet in elevation gain to the Swan Crest and 16 miles hiking distance to Shaw Cabin. Only experienced hikers should consider this project. A wilderness ranger will meet group participants at the trailhead to assist in packing into Shaw Cabin. An early departure from the Holland Lake trailhead at Owl Creek Packers Camp on August 23 will be required. Volunteers may wish to camp at the trailhead the evening before.

August 31- September 2: Sunburst Lake (South Fork of the Bob Marshall Wilderness) -- Seed collection (trip priority) and campsite rehabilitation.

Tentative itinerary:

Saturday 31: Leave from Gorge Creek trailhead.

Travel to camping area (7 miles) and then to Sunburst Lake (an additional 2 miles). Begin project work as time allows.

Sunday September 1: Seed collection and campsite rehabilitation.

Monday, September 2: Travel back to Gorge Creek trailhead.

This trip is moderate in difficulty: approximately 500 feet in elevation gain to Sunburst Lake, and 9 miles in hiking distance. Volunteers should meet at the Gorge Creek trailhead at 8:00 on the morning

of August 31. Because it is 2 1/2 hours travel by dirt road from Hungry Horse, MT to the trailhead, we recommend you travel the day before to the trailhead. More information will be provided by the contacts. The trip coordinator and a wilderness ranger will meet volunteers at the trailhead.

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Lincoln Ranger District
7269 Hwy 200
Lincoln, MT 59639

