

THE SALMON-SELWAY DEFENDER

NEWS OF THE BIG WILD

Friends of the Clearwater
May, 1998

ROADLESS AREAS & WILDERNESS!

by Howie Wolke

As the turn of the century nears, America faces a profound opportunity to be seized or lost, depending upon the collective size and generosity of our hearts: the last chance to save and restore a significant chunk of the dwindling American wilderness. The opportunity of the ages, it's fraught with dangers from foes who respond only to the promise of profits and to the perpetuation of empires.

Since Congress enacted the 1964 Wilderness Act, conservationists have worked to protect as designated Wilderness undeveloped public wildlands—generally known as **Roadless Areas**. Recently, Congress has abandoned its approach to protection, albeit limited, and left vulnerable wildlands open to ongoing industrialization. As a result, our remaining roadless areas are under siege as never before.

Today, attacks upon the wilderness concept reverberate. Bureaucrats pound the self-serving drums of "ecosystem management," "forest health," and other buzzwords designed to convince the gullible that roadless areas and related wildlands need more intensive management, not less. Even some scientists and citizen activists now resign themselves to resource extraction in roadless areas, believing that wilderness is a lost political cause. Some urban environmentalists and "liberal" scholars whine that wilderness is irrelevant to the more mundane issues of urban pollution and social justice. And the corporate-financed, so-called "wise use" movement is a shrill cry of fear-mongering anti-wilderness activism and propaganda.

With powerful allies in Congress, the vocal anti-wildland forces await a forcible response. Their irrational fanaticism provides the opportunity for conservationists to respond by building stronger support for wildlands and by better articulating the vital need to save and restore habitat. **Now is the time for wildland conservation to renew and redouble its commitment to wilderness!**

The America first experienced by Europeans was a teeming wilderness with an unbelievable profusion of life. Over sixty-million bison...a couple hundred-thousand griz...giant elk herds across the plains and from coast to coast...billions of passenger pigeons blackening the eastern sky...billions of spawning salmon...unbroken virgin forests and unplowed prairies...living flood plains and deltas nourished by rich silt-laden floodwaters...

So great was the pre-Columbian American wilderness that folks today can only imagine

the magic squandered in just a few generations. Yet relative to Europe and many other areas, America is lucky. Though depleted, a vestige of wilderness remains, harboring some of the magic, and containing the genetic seeds of a potentially wilder, healthier tomorrow.

According to many of the world's foremost scientists, *any effective strategy to maintain wild native life on Earth must include as a basic fundament, saving unprotected roadless areas and restoring big wilderness.*

Roadless wilderness is essential for the continuation of life's evolutionary drama. So perhaps we'll soon realize that more roads, dams, clearcuts, strip malls, and human proto-plasm make the world poorer, not richer. For as we lose wildness, we lose not just grizzlies, salmon, bull trout, lynx, goshawks, murrelets, owls, songbirds, amphibians, and so much more definable life, but we also lose the indefinable vitality of a living planet, a vestige of our wild selves, the wisdom of the ages, and the key to secrets and questions we've not yet developed the wisdom to ask.

(ed. note: The information is taken from a brochure, *Roadless Areas and Wilderness!* by Howie Wolke of Big Wild Advocates. Complete copies of this excellent brochure can be obtained by writing either Big Wild Advocates, PO Box 318, Conner, MT 59827. A small donation to cover printing and postage would be gratefully accepted. This is the first in a series of articles exploring roadless areas and biodiversity in the Salmon-Selway.)

Some Vital Statistics

- About 9% of the U.S. south of Alaska remains in a roadless and wild condition.
- About 2 1/2% of the lower 48 states is legally protected wilderness (46 million acres). Including Alaska, about 4 1/2% of the U.S. is protected Wilderness (104 million acres).
- Nearly 2/3 of the U.S. National Forest land is roaded and developed. Less than 1/5 of the 191 million acre system is protected wilderness (34.7 million acres). There are 40-45 million acres in unprotected roadless areas up for grabs.
- Roughly 30 million acres of BLM roadless lands are up for grabs in the 48 contiguous states.
- National Park roadless and unprotected lands: 10+ million acres in the U. S. south of Alaska.
- National Wildlife Refuge roadless and unprotected lands: 4+ million acres, not including Alaska.
- Public land roadless areas disappear at the rate of 1-2 million acres per year.**

Summary of Remaining Million-Plus Acre Roadless Wildlands* of the contiguous 48 States

Believe it or not, the state of Idaho has **two** of the TOP TEN remaining roadless areas in the Lower 48 States. The #1 Largest Wildland area, The Frank Church River of No Return wildland, is located almost entirely within central Idaho and includes the Cove/Mallard Area. This River of No Return roadless wildland, with 3,253,000 acres, exceeds the next largest roadless area, the High Sierra in eastern California, by almost one million acres. Idaho also contains the seventh largest roadless area on the Top Ten List, the Selway-Bitterroot of northern Idaho and western Montana with 1,858,000 acres of roadless wildlands. [Note: A 40 x 40 mile square is about a million acres; two million acres is approximately equal to a 56 x 56 mile square. Figures are from *The Big Outside*, by Foreman and Wolke.]

* (designated wilderness plus unprotected roadless)

RARE FOREST CARNIVORES IN THE SALMON-SELWAY:

Lynx, Fisher and Wolverine

Three More Reasons to Cancel the Cove/Mallard Timber Sales

by Kristin Ruether

Wolverine

According to legend, the "skunk-bear" is one of the strongest and most ferocious forest creatures—capable of dragging an entire moose carcass, taking down a caribou, and defending its food from much larger bears and wildcats.

The wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) is one of North America's rarest, least-studied, and most secretive mammals. It is the largest terrestrial member of the mustelid (weasel) family. It is said to look like a bushy-tailed small bear, with its glossy, dark brown coat, short legs, pointy nose, and small eyes. The wolverine's body is heavily muscled and compact, weighing between 20 and 30 pounds and standing about 17 inches tall at the shoulders.

Very few field studies have been conducted on wolverine. This is due to the fact that they naturally maintain very low population densities, and have a solitary and secretive nature. Their preferred habitat is remote places, which makes human access difficult.

We do, however, know that despite its (see *Forest Carnivores*, page 5)



The Salmon-Selway Defender
is a publication of:
Friends of the Clearwater
P.O. BOX 9241
Moscow, ID 83843
phone (208)882-9755
fax (208)883-0727
e-mail: foc@clearwater.net

Friends of the Clearwater is devoted to the protection of Idaho's Greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem, the largest relatively intact wild area left in the lower 48 states. This undiscovered gem on America's public lands contains many unprotected roadless areas and provides crucial habitat for countless species. Friends of the Clearwater helps defend this ecosystem through an aggressive Forest Watch program and with a proven track record in monitoring and appealing timber sales. Friends of the Clearwater is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions to Friends of the Clearwater are tax-deductible.

The Salmon Selway Defender welcomes contributions of artwork and articles pertaining to the protection of the Greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem. Articles in the Salmon-Selway Defender do not necessarily reflect those of Friends of the Clearwater. The deadline for the next issue is October 15, 1998.

Other Groups Defending the Big Wild

Obviously we can't fit all the groups here that we'd like to mention. Here is a partial list (see the past two Defenders for others). We will continue to provide addresses in upcoming issues.

All of these groups do good work and deserve support.

American Wildlands
40 East Main St. Suite 2
Bozeman, MT 59715
406-586-8175

Buffalo Nations
PO Box 957
West Yellowstone, MT 59758
406-646-0070

Earthjustice Legal Defense
11 East Main St. Suite C
Bozeman, MT 59715-4759
406-586-9699

Friends of the West
HC 67 Box 68
Clayton, ID 83227

Predator Project
PO Box 6733
Bozeman, MT 59715
406-587-3389

Wildlands CPR
PO Box 7516
Missoula, MT 59807
406-543-9551

Wilderness Watch
PO Box 9175
Missoula, MT 59807
406-542-2048

Cove/Mallard Featured in L.A. Times

by Peggy Sue McRae

On March 2, 1998, Cove/Mallard was featured in an article by the *L.A. Times*. Our visit by *L.A. Times* reporter Kim Murphy followed the January 22nd Clinton administration proposal for an 18-month moratorium on new roads in large roadless areas, pending development of a long term strategy. Following Murphy's interview with members of Friends of the Clearwater and the Cove/Mallard Coalition, including Chuck "land-of-sky-blue-water" Pezeshki, Murphy joined Gary Macfarlane, Jake Kreilick, and me on a trek up to Dixie, ID to visit firsthand the big wild.

The long trek to Dixie provided hours of conversation. Once again, I was impressed with the articulate knowledge of my colleagues. While we drove up into the snowy forested highland of North Central Idaho, we spoke with Murphy about the interwoven politics and biology essential to the preservation of this region.

Reaching our destination, as Murphy's article states, "now known in environmental circles as 'the mother of all roadless areas,'" we trekked snowy logging roads where the nimble Murphy hopped around a logging truck, there to bring out timber, to interview the driver. Here we observed the vista that says more than any thousand words can ever say, yet is aptly described in the opening paragraph of Murphy's article:

Dixie, Idaho - To gaze upon the Big Mallard Creek is to see something you could spend

a lifetime looking for: a rolling timber carpet in every direction. No railroad tracks. No roads. Just Ponderosa pine and lodgepole and grand fir, with thin veins of snow.

In Dixie, Murphy interviewed the owner of the Lodgepole Inn, Jean Lycan, quoted as saying, "Right now, they [environmentalists] are totally breaking mills, lumberyards, hardware stores and families....I think there's a lot of people, especially back East, that have logged their timber, built their concrete cities and now they say, don't do it in Idaho." While this interview was going on I bought a cup of coffee. It was the first time that I have been served at the Lodgepole Inn's cafe. Still posted in the window is the sign informing customers that the Lodgepole Inn reserves the right to refuse service to Earth First!ers. The poster with a demonic looking hippie with a bullet in his forehead still adorns the outside of the cafe.

Murphy's article addresses the issues of the devastating effects of wilderness roads on water and wildlife. Still, it is clear that opposition to the moratorium on road building remains staunchly entrenched.

Reaching the *Los Angeles Times* was a media milestone for the Cove/Mallard campaign. Not since the activists' base camp was featured in the *Lifestyles* section of the *Washington Post* in 1993 has Cove/Mallard received attention from such a major news source. With road building becoming a national issue, Cove/Mallard comes forth as the obvious poster-child.

THANK YOU!

Friends of the Clearwater wishes to thank the generous support from the Foundation for Deep Ecology and the Y2Y Coalition. The Foundation for Deep Ecology gave a very sizable grant to Friends to conduct work on the Wild Clearwater Campaign and the effort to protect Cove/Mallard through outreach and education. Y2Y contributed needed money to help fund a road inventory on the Clearwater National Forest.

We also thank Patagonia, Mennen foundation, and the Maki Foundation for their generous support in our various programs.

Artists in this issue include Peggy Sue McRae, Asante Riverwind, and Karen Coulter.

RECYCLED NEWSPRINT

COALITION SAYS THANKS!

by the Cove/Mallard Coalition

The Cove/Mallard Coalition wishes to thank everyone who has helped with housing, food, coordination, and general support in the Moscow area. Thanks to Gretchen, Dean, Erika, Kelly, Tamara, Shannon, Sean, Katie, Peter, Karen, Kurt, Lina, Sarah, Lori, Becca, Turning Point, Greg, Shawn, Wade, Ben, Bennett, Donna, Chuck, Larry, Paradise Farm Organics, Camas Farms, Moscow Food Co-op, Bookpeople, the Vox, and anyone else we failed to mention.

COVE/MALLARD MIGHT BE FREE OF SAWS THIS SUMMER! HOWEVER, NEARBY SALES ARE SCHEDULED TO CARVE INTO ROADLESS LAND. COME TO IDAHO. For more Information Contact:

Cove/Mallard Coalition
PO Box 8968
Moscow, ID 83843
208-882-9755; email: cove@moscow.com

CATCHING UP

by Steve Paulson

Friends has survived the winter in good condition, just like the local herds of wild elk and the Endangered wolves that now feed on them. In many cases they survive because of our collective works. Friends has been busy and growing. Office funding is approaching stability. Several exciting new projects have received grants. We are winning appeals and filing comments on most of the grievous projects being proposed by the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests. The Wild Clearwater Coalition lawsuit has born fruit. Our volunteer staff has grown, and we are catching the attention of local environmental dissidents with requests for help on new projects.

The paramount reason for these successes is the actions of our all-volunteer staff. Volunteers include: Erika Cunningham, Adam Fish, Kelly Kingsland, Gary Macfarlane, Linda Miller, Kristin Ruether, and Gretchen Stewart. Heartfelt thanks, and the wish that someday, you people will receive your rewards. Also, thanks to our generous donors. You make this happen.

The Wild Clearwater Coalition lawsuit (litigated by the LAW Fund) against the Clearwater National Forest (CNF) has seen unexpected and early successes. The CNF has withdrawn, without comment, most of the sales that we were bringing suit for. Most importantly, the White Sand Timber Sale was quietly withdrawn. FOC's appeal to stop this sale was denied in the summer of 1997, and this sale initiated our desire to sue for environmental justice. The Fishbait Timber Sale is one sale that the CNF intends to proceed with, but the agency has modified the Fishbait sale significantly in an effort to strengthen their court case. Our plan is to continue the lawsuit on the basis of their past actions. As a result of these negotiations, the CNF's timber pipeline (next year's habitat destruction) has been reduced to 25 million board feet from their wishful 55 million board feet. This lawsuit and our associated efforts has dove-tailed nicely with the proposed moratorium on building roads in roadless areas.

Appeals completed by FOC include: Dworshak Timber Sale (CNF), Elkhorn Jersey Project (Nez Perce National Forest), and Project 2021 (Nez Perce). The Elkhorn Jersey Project was an inappropriate manipulation of the Wilderness Act and was withdrawn by the agency without admitting defeat.

Comments on destructive projects



include:

1) **Nez Perce National Forest:** several proposals to dredge the South Fork of the Clearwater and Red Rivers, grazing allotments in the American River and near Hells Canyon, several timber sales, thinning projects in the South Fork of the Clearwater River and Slate Creek, gopher poisoning projects, road closure projects in the upper Red River (actually kind of a good project for once, if they really do close the area!), proposals for waterlines, and prescribed fires.

2) **Clearwater National Forest:** West Fork Potlatch Creek project, trail projects in Weitas Creek, gopher poisoning proposals, right-of-way proposals for roads.

3) **Kootenai National Forest:** ASARCO project (silver mine).

4) **Salmon-Challis National Forest:** a new Beartrap Timber Proposal and several mining proposals.

Recently, the Yellowstone to Yukon Coalition's (of which FOC is a member) Mini-grant Program Committee granted FOC \$1000 (Canadian) to begin the work of documenting the extensive road system in place on the Clearwater National Forest. The Forest Service denies the existence of many of these roads, which justifies their building of more roads. Several volunteers are ready to begin this documentation, and this grant will help pay expenses for transportation and food. If anybody would like to donate old lap-top computers for this project, they will be used well and are tax-deductible. More volunteers are welcome and needed, as this is no small project.

Please, if you can, send donations of cash or equipment to:

FOC, PO Box 9241, Moscow, ID 83843.

NEWS BRIEFS:

Wolf Update

Federal Judge Downes of Wyoming recently issued a bizarre ruling on endangered wolves. Two different suits were combined in one strange decision by the judge. One case, brought by Earthjustice Legal Defense, representing Predator Project, Sinapu, the Audubon Society, and the Grey Wolf Committee (Grey Wolf Committee is an ad hoc group started by Steve Paulson, founder of FOC. FOC strongly supports the efforts of the Grey Wolf Committee). This case sought to give full Endangered Species Act protection to Idaho wolves as the experimental non-essential designation was erroneously applied because there were already wolves in the Salmon-Selway. The judge correctly ruled that the Fish and Wildlife Service had erred and those wolves should receive full protection under the ESA.

However, the judge ruled on another suit brought by the Farm Bureau that the wolves reintroduced into Yellowstone and the Big Wild of central Idaho were to be removed (killed) pending review of his decision by the Federal 10th Circuit Court of Appeals. The judge didn't say how anyone would be able to distinguish between the wolves already in those ecosystems and the ones that were reintroduced!

This part of the judge's decision has been appealed by Earthjustice on behalf of Predator Project, Sinapu, and the Grey Wolf Committee. Tax-deductible donations for this case can be sent to:

Earthjustice Legal Defense
11 East Main St. Suite C
Bozeman, MT 59715

ISC Does it Again!

The Idaho Sporting Congress recently won two significant court victories. The first was on Cuddy Mountain, an area of old-growth ponderosa on the Payette National Forest in the Hells Canyon ecosystem. The second decision was on the Targhee National Forest in Miners Gulch. The courts ruled that the agency had to have valid data to justify its findings. While the courts defer to the scientific judgment of agency professionals, there must be sound data on which to base those decisions.

Nevertheless, this good ruling is tempered by the fact much of Cuddy Mountain has already been logged and destroyed. The courts would not stop logging while the case was being heard.

Bison Saved

Buffalo Nations, a group seeking to protect bison in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem from being shot by various government agencies, achieved great success this past winter in preventing a repeat of the slaughter of 1996 and 1997. Buffalo Nations wishes to thank those who contributed to this success including help from the Cove/Mallard Coalition. Contact:

Buffalo Nations
PO Box 957
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

WILD TO THE LAST

Environmental Conflict in the Clearwater Country
by Charles Pezeshki

a book review
by Gary Macfarlane

Anybody who cares about wildness, Idaho, good writing, and the truth will enjoy *Wild to the Last*. This book is the most important history of this remarkable place, written by someone who loves wilderness and clings to the Clearwater like a Pacific lamprey to a Chinook.

Wild to the Last is an intensely personal tale of the Clearwater Country, the wildest part of the USA this side of Canada. It chronicles stories of special places on national forests in the Clearwater Basin, the threats they are facing, and the people who seek to preserve and to develop them. Chuck Pezeshki shows us the area is defined by rivers. This place of moving water and, at times, moving land (as the landslides of the recent past demonstrate), is real and fierce, the grist for evolution—the carnival of life and death.

The Kelly Creek/Great Burn roadless area, straddling the Idaho/Montana border, but primarily in Idaho, is one such wild place. Chuck and his intern, Craig, freeze in the rivers, see the reborn forests, and eat lunch high on the divide, Craig in Montana and Chuck, ever the loyalist, in Idaho. Ghosts of grizzlies, perhaps even a corporeal one, and a pack of wolves call Kelly Creek home.

Even though Chuck is chided by Kelly, his wife, for feigning to be Jesus Christ in his quest to protect the Clearwater, *Wild to the Last* is beyond self-loathing or arrogance, syrupy nature writing, or even pontification. It is about a vanishing landscape and the imperfect people who love and fight for it. As such, these desperate figures become mythic, warts and all. The Wild Rockies Earth First! toast that is the introduction of the book sums it up well:

To a life of shame and failure,
Of sorrow and despair.
To a life undiversified by hope or joy,
All desire gone,
All hopes ground to dust.
To a malevolent God.
To jail,
To fate.
And to the Wild Rockies,
Wild now, wild still, wild to the last.



AN IDAHO PERSPECTIVE

Ron McFarland, poet
This poem appeared in Spring 1997
THE TALKING RIVER REVIEW.
(reprinted with permission of the author)

Back in '72 you could by god just about make a living in the woods driving an 18-wheeler, Silver Dome, Big Burn, Little Baldy, names on a map some bunch of hippies found somewhere in San Francisco. Next thing you know they're out here strung across the road in sleeping bags, chained up to trees, slamming spikes into any cedar worth putting a saw to. One of them dumped a bag of sugar into the tank of Jim Metsker's Cat, about two thousand dollars worth of damages and him with the three kids and a sick wife and no insurance.

Marge says they're hypocrites like the ones in Luke who can see the sky and the sun but don't know the time of day, whispers, "As if they didn't sit on wooden chairs and write their nasty letters on paper made of pulp with cedar pencils and on tables made of walnut."

This one little gal, dishwater blonde but wasn't bad lookin' after they cleaned her up, cute little thing, like Marge says, "somebody's daughter," pipes up in court, we gotta have perspective. Perspective. The trees was here before columbus, some of them anyways, and they got a right to live. Says we oughta think of our grandchildren. She's what-twenty? Hell, I'm sixty-two and I got grandchildren, got four of 'em, two girls, two boys, and the boys are by God going to be loggers if I have anything to say about it, and both them girls could by God do a lot worse than marry loggers.

Then this little gal from Pasadena or wherever starts to carry on, gets mad, and you shoulda heard the words come out of that sweet little mouth. And hell, I've heard 'em all. Two years in Korea with the 82nd Airborne. Then suddenly she starts into cryin'. You never seen the like. Marge looks like her face is going to fall off. The courtroom gets quiet as a tomb, and all you can hear is this little gal sobbing like there was no tomorrow.

I look down at my hands, study the stub of my left little finger and think of the day I wrenched it off setting choker somewhere around Quartz Ridge. I think about how the fishing used to be down on the South Fork, before the silt. Some days I got too good a memory for my own good, but I'm lucky. I got a real high tolerance for pain.

Forest Carnivores (from page 1)

fierce reputation, it is chiefly a scavenger, not a hunter. Its main food source is large mammal carrion killed by other, larger predators. Wolverine require large, roadless forests with little human activity.

As roadbuilding, logging, and development intrude on roadless forests nationwide, wolverine habitat is dwindling. Healthy populations are known to persist only in Montana and Idaho. Because of wolverines' scavenging nature, they are very vulnerable to baited traps, and trapping wolverine (still legal in Montana) can easily extirpate them from areas.

Wolverine is listed as a "sensitive species" in Forest Service Regions 1 and 4. A wolverine was killed in a trap at the end of Noble Road in the Cove/Mallard area.

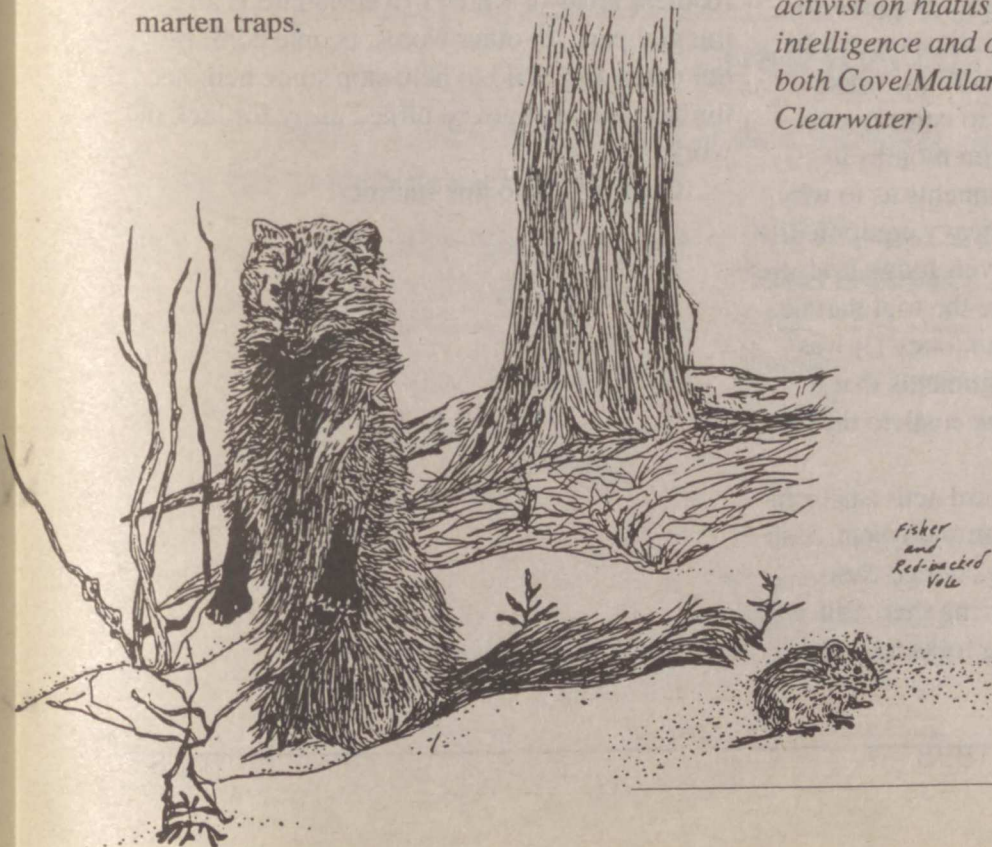
Fisher

The fisher (*Martes pennanti*) is another large member of the mustelid family. It has a dark glossy coat with a creamy patch on the throat, small, round ears, and pointy nose. Fishers are generalized predators, hunting animals such as snowshoe hare, porcupine, and other rodents.

Like wolverine, fishers also maintain a low population density. Their preferred habitat is wet, mature, old-growth grand fir forests. They are known to avoid forest openings. In the winter, they require large hollow logs and brush piles for resting sites.

Of course, logging and roadbuilding have destroyed much of the fisher's habitat. Trapping has also hit fishers very hard. Montana is the only state which currently allows fisher trapping. The historic range of the fisher included most of Canada and the northern United States, with the range extending further south along the western mountain chains. Today that range has been reduced to the few remote high-elevation forests that remain.

The fisher is also listed as a "sensitive species" by Regions 1 and 4 of the Forest Service and is a management indicator species for old growth habitat on the Nez Perce National Forest. Fishers have been sighted in the Cove/Mallard area. In a 1993 addendum to the Cove/Mallard Biological Assessment, the Nez Perce National Forest wildlife biologist warned that timber sales were likely to affect fisher population viability and that the fishers could be extirpated from the area as a result of the sales. In addition to reducing the quality of habitat for the fisher through extensive roading and clearcutting, the roads open up the area to trappers. Although it is not legal to trap fishers in Idaho, fishers are extremely vulnerable to marten traps.



Lynx

Lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), or "snowshoe cats," are close cousins of mountain lions and bobcats. However, they have several unique physical characteristics which distinguish them from their cousins: long tufts of fur on the tips of their ears, a black-tipped tail, and huge feet. Their "snowshoe" feet give them the advantage of being efficient deep-snow hunters. Their feet are about the same size as mountain lions' feet. However, lynx weigh only about 40 pounds, compared to mountain lions' 100 pounds!

The lynx is known for being solitary and secretive— even those who spend much time in lynx habitat have rarely spotted the cats. It is a remarkably docile cat. When trapped, it sits quietly, or calmly tugs at the trap. This is quite a contrast to the scrappy, hot-tempered bobcat.

The lynx requires a fire-created mosaic of forest habitat including mature forests for denning and young forests for hunting. Lynx hunt snowshoe hares almost exclusively; thus, their populations are closely tied to those of the hares.

Unfortunately, the Forest Service has used the fact that snowshoe hares occupy young forests to justify clearcutting, claiming that it improves lynx hunting habitat. In reality, roads and clearcuts are extremely harmful to lynx populations. Roads bring trappers, and

lynx, being among the most curious of all forest creatures, are very susceptible to trapping.

The historical range of the lynx included most of Canada and the northern United States. Today, healthy populations in the United States are known to occur only in Washington and Montana. Scattered populations may exist in numerous northern states and throughout the Rocky Mountains.

Lynx and their tracks have been reported many times in the Salmon-Selway.

In 1994, Region 6 (comprising Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, Utah and Wyoming) of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), backed by many biologists, recommended that the lynx be listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but the Acting Director of the USFWS denied the request. That decision was appealed, and a federal district court judge found that the Acting Director's denial, which ignored the advice of the agency's own scientists, was arbitrary and capricious. A settlement was reached in which the USFWS agreed to propose the lynx for listing as threatened under the ESA by June 30, 1998.

(ed. note Kristin Ruether is an incredible activist on hiatus from Cornell University. Her intelligence and organizing skills have helped both Cove/Mallard Coalition and Friends of the Clearwater).

Tailed-Frog



Cove/Mallard Update

by Cove/Mallard Coalition

1998 has brought several developments for the Cove/Mallard campaign, including a rejection of our latest appeal, temporary logging relief for this summer in the form of a roadless area road-building moratorium, and the conviction of several activists in federal court.

In January, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals heard the appeal of the most recent lawsuit the Idaho Sporting Congress (ISC) brought against the U.S. Forest Service to protect Cove/Mallard. The lawsuit documented numerous violations of laws, including the Endangered Species Act, National Forest Management Act, and Clean Water Act.

The 9th circuit court wrote a one-sentence rejection of the appeal. Most court decisions give reasons and use the lengthy boring language of the legal profession. In this instance, the court couldn't come up with arguments against ISC. Because Idaho's federal district court is in the corporate bed, ISC knew all along it would have to appeal to the 9th Circuit. Appellate judges are selected from a pool in the multi-state region in a judicial form of Russian roulette. The bullet happened to be in the chamber when ISC got a lead judge from Boise, Idaho. His office is just down the hall from the judge who made the bad ruling in the first place. They probably hit the golf links together. The second judge was imported from Pennsylvania to ease the caseload of the 9th circuit. The third was an 85-year-old judge with pneumonia who appeared via speaker-phone from the hospital. There is a silver lining in the decision; it is not a precedent, since there is no language on which to base a precedent. We can always file another lawsuit. Yahoo.

Also in January, U.S. Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck announced his much-anticipated road-building moratorium. To summarize the announcement, it proposes an 18-month interim road-building moratorium on inventoried roadless areas of 5,000+ acres and those that are 1,000+ acres if adjacent to existing wilderness areas. During this time, the Forest Service will work to develop a new long-term transportation policy for the National Forest system. (Presumably because it currently has a multi-billion dollar backlog on road maintenance.)

There are, however, several significant exceptions to the interim moratorium. All National Forests in the Pacific Northwest (the spotted forests) are exempted. All forests which have recently revised their forest plan are exempted, including Alaska's Tongass National Forest, home to some of the remaining temperate rainforests in North America. All road-

(see Cove/Mallard on page 6)

GRASSROOTS

GRASSROOTS is a feature of the Salmon-Selway Defender. We dedicate this space to grassroots activist groups that are outstanding in the field of preserving forests and biodiversity.

by Martin Stephan

The Northern Rockies Preservation Project (NRPP) is a volunteer grassroots organization founded in 1994. At that time a need was recognized for a new voice in Idaho's capital city--one that spoke out strongly for the trees and critters. Our mission is to defend and preserve the Big Wild of the Northern Rockies, protecting biodiversity through group activism, and creating a presence of a 'no compromise' conservation movement in the bioregion.

In the four years since its birth "The Project", as it is affectionately known, has raised hell at the steps of Boise Cascade headquarters, consorted with various local/regional groups and riff raff, and done our best to stop the insanity enveloping our bioregion sometimes known as "progress" or "management". While the Project tends to enjoy quite a bit of chaos in its ranks there is some method to our madness.

On its surface NRPP is primarily a forest defense group. This means we watch-dog the US Forest Service, trying to stop them from

selling off our National Forests to the private timber corporations. This usually includes writing timber sale appeals, helping with litigation, and of course re-educating the public.

Education is one of our favorite things to do. Every April we host Alternative Earth Day, a family fun day in the park. Then in the fall we have the Boise Eco-Fair, a grassroots bash where we get to turn the general public on to our vision for the world. Other activities we love include guided hikes into some of our favorite threatened roads areas like the Deadwood near Boise or Cove/Mallard up north. These hikes are one of the most effective ways to educate and motivate our friends of the forest.

One of our educational highlights is the Big Wild Roadshow. With generous help from the Fund for Wild Nature, we sent two of our favorite bearded activists on the road for a whirlwind tour of the nation to talk to over 45 different groups in 30 different states! They reached out to thousands and even rubbed noses with a few politicians in D.C.

Finally, if all this wasn't enough, we also have our monthly forum the Northern Rockies Review in which we discuss a current topic of interest in our region, and hang out and have

fun in the best (only?) vegetarian restaurant in Idaho: the Koffee Klatsch.

All this great stuff is tied together with our newsletter the Northern Rockies News. This periodic publication is getting more hi-tech every issue and helps the average citizen comprehend all of the amazing things we do here at NRPP. Besides the pretty pictures, the News explains how to get involved defending the forest and kicking corporate butt off of our public land.

While all this may sound like a lot of fun we take it extremely seriously. Idaho, our home, is losing 11 acres of wildland every hour to greed and a shortsighted vision for the world. It is time to spread the word and to build the momentum needed to halt this crisis. It is time act decisively in defense of the land and work tirelessly for the preservation of the Northern Rockies.

Get in touch with us.

Northern Rockies Preservation Project

P.O. Box 625

Boise, ID 83701

208-345-8077

NRPP@lesbois.com

Keep It Wild!!



*Moon of Stalking
not in anger
no evil spirit striking
tracking, leaping
from a stirring
in gaunt belly deep
warm memory of excitement
inside sated purring
through cold snow
each step guides
-Asarté*

Cove/Mallard (from page 5)

building timber sales for which contracts have been signed are exempted (including some near Cove/Mallard on the Nez Perce National Forest). Finally, the interim plan in no way protects the integrity of the roadless areas it does cover, since it allows helicopter and cable logging and any other forms of resource extraction that can be done without roads. About the only large roadless areas the plan does cover are those in Idaho and Montana.

The Forest Service is currently in the process of digesting public comment and preparing its "final" interim policy, which should be released in late spring. If the final version remains similar to the proposed version, Cove/Mallard will be covered. That means no logging this summer.

In early March, nine activists were tried in Idaho federal court for their roles in the Jack and Noble blockades of summer '97. Four defendants plead guilty without remorse and received short jail sentences or fines; one, was convicted after defending himself and got a lecture, 30 days in jail and a \$500 fine. Four

activists, who also proceeded with trial, were found guilty of maintaining a structure in a road and impeding traffic at the 'High Jack' blockade. Their sentencing was delayed until mid-May to allow the prosecution to craft arguments for extracting restitution money out of the activists (for the heavy equipment required to extricate them). In May, the activists received 60 days in jail and \$500 each in fines, since they made clear their inability to comply with probation. Despite the two extra months to prepare, the prosecution's arguments as to why the four should pay \$5000 of heavy equipment bills still didn't hold water. Even Judge Lodge, who stated that he knew before the trial that he wanted them to pay restitution money (!) was convinced by the defense's arguments that it was impossible to assign all the costs to the four defendants.

All spring, two Cove/Mallard activists from the Northern Rockies Preservation Project, Josh and Martin, have been touring college campuses around the country showing their Big Wild Roadshow and recruiting folks to come and help out this summer.

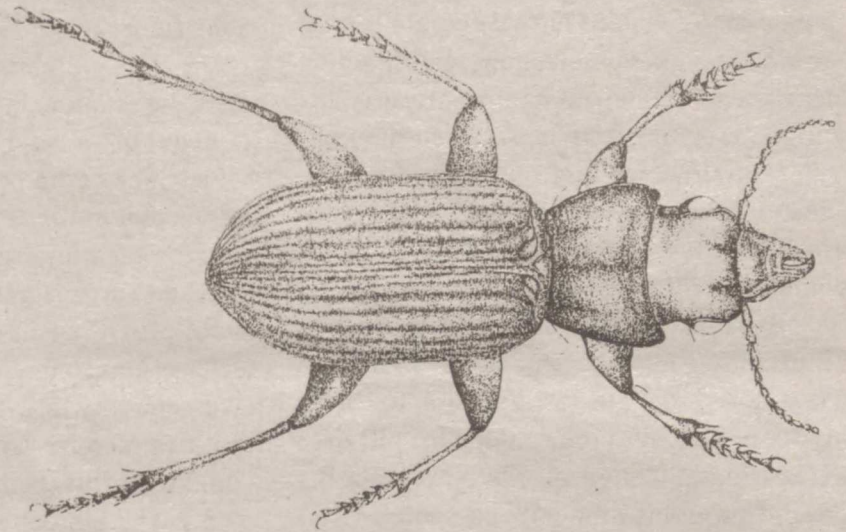
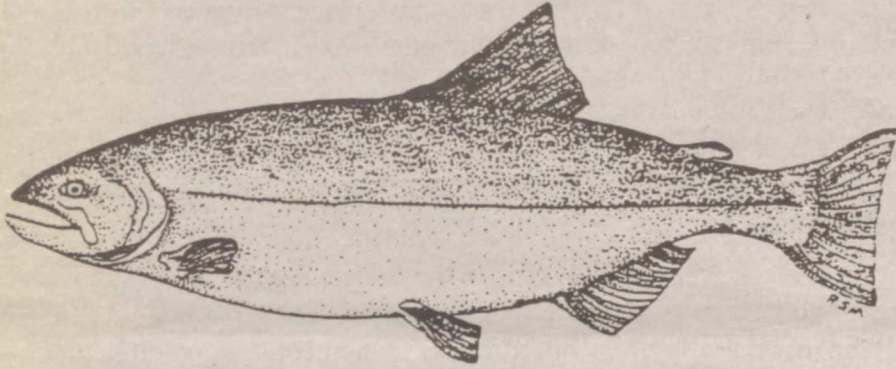
We will use this summer to do extensive water quality monitoring and other ground-truthing on the completed sale units for possible fuel for future lawsuits. Also, there are several egregious timber sales on roadless areas in the Nez Perce National Forest, the same large roadless areas of which Cove/Mallard is an integral part. In other words, people coming out to the Big Wild to help stop some heinous timber sales will not be turned away for lack of work.

Come to Idaho this summer!

PROTECTING IDAHO'S GREATER SALMON-SELWAY ECOSYSTEM

Why does "Friends of the Clearwater" exist?

What is the purpose? Simply, "Friends" are here to do what friends do. We are here to speak out in defense of a place, a landscape, the water, and the plants and animals that call that place home. This particular place, the Greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem (encompassing the wild Salmon and Clearwater drainages) cannot protect itself from the harmful actions of people. We dig mines, build roads, graze livestock, cut trees, degrade streams, and ride in motorized vehicles. All of those human activities are potentially destructive to land, watersheds, and the ecosystems they support.



What is Friends of the Clearwater and what does it do?

Friends of the Clearwater began in 1987 when two people appealed a timber sale on the North Fork Ranger District of the Clearwater National Forest. Since then, those two **Friends of the Clearwater** grew into hundreds of people who have become **activists** in defense of the Greater Salmon-Selway River Ecosystem, the largest relatively intact wild area left in the lower 48 states.

Some of the most productive work **Friends of the Clearwater** have done is "forest watching." Thousands of hours each year are spent in practically invisible tasks such as requesting official documents from the Forest Service and other public agencies; reading those lengthy texts; appealing in written form certain decisions that violate the National Environmental Policy Act of 1976 or otherwise harm the land, streams or wildlife on the National Forests.

In addition to engaging in "forest watch" activities that occur mainly on paper, others have researched animal and plant populations in the field. Objects of studies in the Greater Salmon-Selway ecosystem have included naturally occurring wolves (prior to reintroduction), the Coeur d'Alene Salamander, osprey nests on the North Fork of the Clearwater, and the Bank Monkeyflower. These research results prompted activists to petition the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list the CDA Salamander and the Bank Monkeyflower as threatened.

Educating the public

Offering educational opportunities to the general public is another aim of **Friends of the Clearwater**. Speakers, multi-media presentations and workshops on wide-ranging topics are sponsored by **Friends** several times throughout the year. And through this newsletter **Friends of the Clearwater** attempts to bring more clearly into focus local and regional policies and their effect on the biology of the area. The hope is that those who become knowledgeable will join with others in actively protecting this large ecosystem.

The Greater Salmon-Selway Ecosystem contains the most pristine, remote wildlands in the lower 48 states and includes the single largest roadless area in the United States south of Alaska. This large, forested ecosystem is defined by its rivers and streams: The Salmon (Middle Fork, Main Fork, and South Fork), the Clearwater (Selway, Lochsa, South Fork, North Fork, and Little North Fork), the St. Joe, the Boise, the Bitterroot, and the Payette.

Most of these rivers and streams in the Salmon-Selway Ecosystem are still healthy, still untouched by erosion of the fragile Idaho soils and free from other pollutants. But roadbuilding, logging, grazing, and motorized activities constantly threaten the health of these streams. When a stream habitat is fouled by mudslides and other forms of soil erosion, all aquatic life is degraded as well as the surrounding biotic community.

Friends of the Clearwater attempts to protect and preserve this last large habitat of so many species. We hope our efforts will allow the creatures and their habitat to flourish and retain their rightful place in the web of nature. Won't you join us in this advocacy work to save the plants and animals and the largest piece of wild forest still standing?

friends of the clearwater

YES, I want to help Friends of the Clearwater, defend the Last Big Wild in the lower 48 states. Here's my tax-deductible contribution:

- \$15 Senior/Student
- \$25 Individual
- \$35 Family
- \$50 Supporter
- \$100 Patron
- \$ _____ other

NAME: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

Friends of the Clearwater
PO Box 9241 Moscow, ID 83843
(208)882-9755 foc@clearwater.net

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

NEW THREAT TO WILDERNESS AND OTHER PUBLIC LANDS

by George Nickas

At the close of the 104th Congress, Senator Larry Craig (R-ID), at the behest of outfitters in Idaho, introduced legislation that would have had disastrous consequences for Wilderness and other public lands. The "Outfitter Guide Policy Act" would have granted outfitters the right to have permanent Wilderness camps—reserved sites with corrals, tent frames, piped-in running water, storage structures, refrigerators, caches and a host of other facilities. The camps would be permanently reserved to land-based outfitters, while river running companies would get permanently reserved launches and user-days. Upon introducing his bill, Sen. Craig acknowledged that it was too late in the session to act on his bill, but promised to reintroduce his bill in the next session of Congress. On November 8, 1997, Sen. Craig, this time with co-sponsor Ron Wyden (D-OR), made good on Craig's threat.

The "Outfitter Policy Act of 1997," will dramatically change the nature of commercial outfitting on public lands. It grants commercial outfitters "PRIVATE RIGHTS" on public lands. It has ENORMOUS ramifications for designated WILDERNESS, WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS, NATIONAL PARKS, NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES and all other federal lands and rivers. The 56-page bill is loaded with provisions designed to benefit commercial outfitters at the expense of other users and our wildlands.

Following is a brief account of what this bill will do.

1.) The bill constitutes the first major amendment to the WILDERNESS ACT. Outfitters will be given the right to have permanent structures and facilities, such as corrals, tent frames tent pads, spring boxes, piped-in water, refrigerators, etc. in Wilderness

Areas all of which are now prohibited by law. The same provision would guarantee motorboat or aircraft use wherever it existed at any time prior to enactment of this bill. These are authorized as "Traditional or Historic Activities." This provision is a thinly veiled attempt to reinstitute a number of illegal activities that outfitters in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness had become accustomed to, and which were stopped as a result of a lawsuit by conservationists, and there's no telling how far this provision could lead. For example, the

Forest Service in Alaska recently ruled against a plan to create 129 helicopter landing zones in Wildernesses on the Tongass National Forest. If Craig's bill passes and the helicopter tour companies can show they once used these Wildernesses, they will have the right to do so in the future.

2.) The bill permanently and completely alters the relationship between commercial services and WILDERNESS. The Wilderness Act prohibits commercial services in Wilderness except to the "extent NECESSARY" for realizing the purposes of Wilderness. This bill shifts the emphasis from what is "necessary" to one of providing a guaranteed, profitable business environment. While federal agencies have generally failed in the past to properly limit commercial use in Wilderness, this bill would **prohibit** them from doing so.

3.) The bill converts outfitter "special use permits", which are revocable privileges, to PRIVATE RIGHTS, defined in S. 1489 as "Outfitter Contracts." These contracts can be sold or otherwise transferred to third parties provided minimal operating standards are met 75% percent of the time. Allocated use cannot be reduced, but can be increased if a manager determines use capacity is "available." Existing special use permits are automatically converted

to Standard Outfitter Contracts, creating an overnight wind-fall for outfitters. The agencies can not condition contract transfers on anything.

4.) The bill makes it virtually impossible for federal agencies to enforce contract standards.

5.) The bill precludes "freedom of choice" allocation models or any method that would equitably distribute use between private users and commercial outfitters.

6.) The bill explicitly supersedes important provisions of 15 major environmental laws including the National Forests Organic Act, National Parks Organic Act, Federal Land Management Policy Act, National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act and many others.

7.) A special clause grants "STATE SUPREMACY" to ALASKA. Federal agencies are prohibited from requiring resource protection measures that are inconsistent with laws and regulations of the Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game.

8.) This legislation does a DISSERVICE to those outfitters and guides who have played by the rules and have not insisted on special privileges on public land. Many have led the way in developing and teaching minimum impact travel and camping techniques. There will always be a place for these outfitters and guides on public lands.

What Can You Do?

Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) has co-sponsored the "Outfitter Policy Act of 1997," which is now in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee. Senator Wyden needs to hear from as many people as possible that S.1489 is completely unacceptable. Letters, phone calls e-mail or faxes are all effective means to let Wyden and other senators know how you feel about S. 1489. Wyden can be reached at

Senator Ron Wyden
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-5244
(202) 228-2717-fax
e-mail: senator@wyden.senate.gov

Any senator can be reached by writing to: Senator _____, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

SPREAD THE WORD! Contact other organizations and individuals and urge them to oppose S. 1489. This bill is a "sleeper," not everyone is aware it exists or what it does.

Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Citizens everywhere will be outraged when they learn about this give-away bill. Be sure to include in your letter a suggestion that people contact their senators and representatives on this important bill.

Stay tuned for updates on the "Outfitter Policy Act of 1997." Support Wilderness Watch and their efforts to protect our Wilderness and Wild Rivers Systems from legislation such as this and from other threats!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

George Nickas
Policy Coordinator
Wilderness Watch
Box 9175
Missoula, Montana 59807
(406) 542-2048

(ed. note: George Nickas is one of the nation's most outstanding advocates for wildlands. A native of the West, he has worked for 20 years to protect the wildlands of this remarkable region. Wilderness Watch is an organization worthy of everyone's support.)



Friends of the
Clearwater
PO Box 9241
Moscow, ID 83843

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #470
MOSCOW, ID 83843