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CLEARWATER DEFENDER

NEWS OF THE BIG WILD

A PUBLICATION OF
FRIENDS OF THE CLEARWATER

ISSUED QUARTERLY
SPRING 2011, VOL. 8 NO.1

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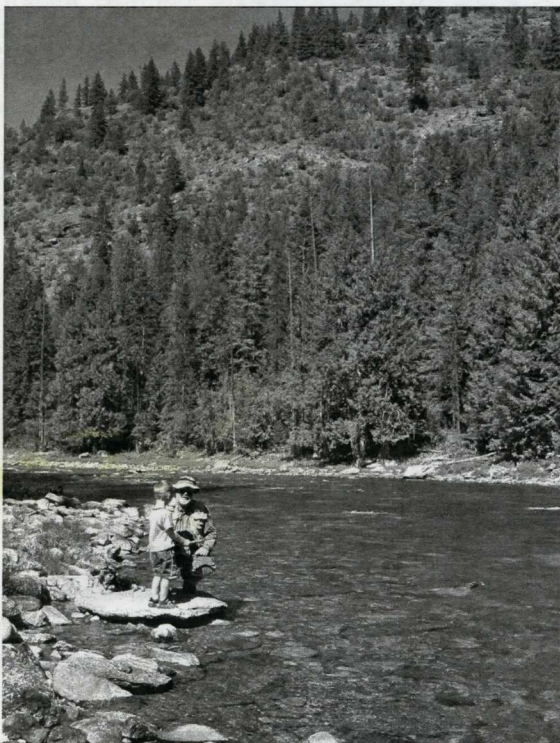
Lochsa Land Exchange Promotes Public Land Disposal Marilyn Beckett Guest Opinion

In April 2009, the grassroots group Friends of the Palouse Ranger District (FPRD) began studying the Upper Lochsa Land Exchange in the interest of the public. Exchange negotiations began circa 2006 between Tim Blixseth's Western Pacific Timber (WPT)/TWJ Holdings and the Forest Service (FS), after Blixseth bought the clear-cut checkerboard-like Plum Creek lands to trade with the Forest Service for public lands in the McCall area where WPT already owned land. The exchange mutated into a proposal involving 3 different National Forests—the Nez Perce, Clearwater, and Panhandle—promoted as a “blocking up” of FS lands in the Lochsa through disposal of public lands throughout northern Idaho.

The exchange parcels spread from Riggins to Athol, including areas around Elk City, Elk River, Pierce, North Fork of the Clearwater, Gold Hill, West Dennis, Bull Run, McCroskey Park and more. Most of the approximately 18,000 acres to be eliminated are in the Palouse Ranger District. Large acreages of the exchange lands are ancestral territorial lands of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe.

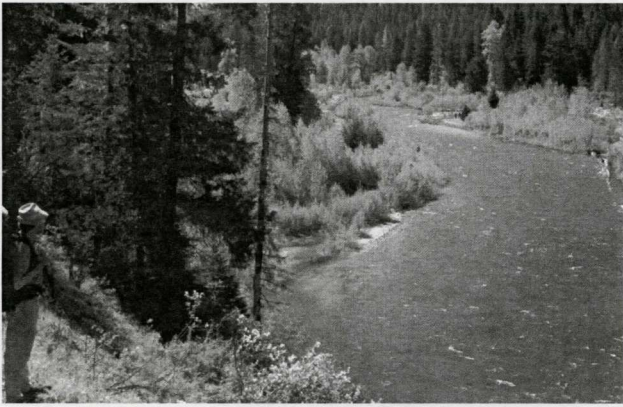
The public was bypassed by the Forest Service in this proposal. Many of the lands proposed in the exchange are places where people fish, cut firewood, camp, hunt for berries, deer and elk, mushrooms, hike, bike, ski, and enjoy wildlife. These lands are public forests that are appreciated by over 100,000 people from numerous local counties, yet people received no formal notification on this proposal until November 2008.

Issues of soils, watersheds, visual quality, old growth, wildlife, etc. have peaked public concerns. Despite efforts to redirect the Forest Service on the public's behalf, the FS has pushed the proposal forward to the stage of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), as of November 2010. Friends of the Palouse Ranger District has tried to sustain public awareness through letters and phone calls, signs, press releases,



North Fork Clearwater River
Chuck Pezeshki Photo

See Exchange page 4



Weitas Creek Deserves Wilderness Designation
FOC File Photo

Weitas as Wilderness 2011

FOC is working on an important campaign to gain Wilderness designation for the 260,000 acre Weitas Creek roadless area on the Clearwater National Forest. With low-elevation river bottoms, abundant intact habitat for fish and wildlife, and soft-rounded mountaintops filled with solitude and spirit, Weitas Creek is considered the heart of Wild Clearwater Country and an area in need of protection.

Off-road vehicles and proposals for further road building and logging in Weitas greatly threaten this wild landscape.

Please consider joining us on July 29-31 for a 3-day field trip filled with camping, hiking, interpretation and an evening wolf-howling seminar as we seek to inspire and explore this irreplaceable frontier forest.

In addition, consider submitting a letter to your local newspaper. Share with them why Weitas is a special place and why you would like to see it gain Wilderness designation.

The Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act would designate Weitas as wilderness, bringing lasting Congressional protection.

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FRIENDS OF THE CLEARWATER

THE CLEARWATER DEFENDER

IS A PUBLICATION OF:

Friends of the Clearwater

P.O. Box 9241, Moscow, Idaho 83843

208-882-9755

foc@friendsoftheclearwater.org

www.friendsoftheclearwater.org

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

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

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

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Education and Outreach Director: Brett Haverstick

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Layout and Design: Brett Haverstick

Editor: Brett Haverstick, Gary Macfarlane

Copy Editor: Bill Bonney, Jim Tarter

Reaching Out To You **Brett Haverstick**

If 2010 went out with a bang, then 2011 has started off with a boom! The Education & Outreach department is in full gear right now and there is much to reflect on and even more to look forward to. The first three months of the year have been spent opposing Big Oil's mega-loads on U.S. 12, giving presentations to students at the University of Idaho, Washington State University and Lewis-Clark State College, and preparing for an action-packed summer in Wild Clearwater Country.

On Saturday January 29th over one-hundred people gathered on the Memorial Bridge in Lewiston, Idaho to protest the movement of the 1st Conoco Phillips mega-load up the Clearwater Valley. With a slew of banners and signs, people from Montana and Idaho took to the streets to let the Idaho Transportation Department and the US Forest Service know that we aren't going to tolerate the Wild & Scenic Middle Fork Clearwater and Lochsa River corridor be converted into a permanent "high and wide" industrial highway. The public rally concluded with a march to the Port of Lewiston to see first-hand what 30 feet tall, 25 feet wide and 700,000 lbs. looks like.

Despite 3,500 signatures demanding that U.S. 12 not be used to transport the mega-loads, the first oil processing module departed the Port of Lewiston on February 1st. Since then we have been tirelessly working with Fighting Goliath, Northern Rockies Rising Tide and All Against the Haul to monitor the loads as they travel between 10:00pm and 5:30am. Dozens of citizens from Missoula to Moscow have been driving the highway to observe and record all travel plan violations and encounters with highway officials. We can't thank all of you enough for sacrificing sleep and sanity to watchdog your beloved river corridor.

In the month of February we were able to work with faculty and students from Washington State University on two different occasions. Associate Professor Jolie Kaytes and her Landscape Architecture students kidnapped Gary and me for two days to assist with navigation and interpretation of the Clearwater Basin, culminating in an enjoyable night's stay at the Lochsa Lodge and a snowshoeing trip up by Lolo Pass. On February 24th we worked with the WSU Environmental Science Club to co-sponsor a viewing of the documentary H2Oil. A big thanks to WSU student Robbi Nilson and FOC volunteer Ashley Lipscomb for planning the event and helping folks make the connection between the Alberta Tar Sands and the mega-loads traveling U.S. 12.

Hats off to Gene and Mollie Eastman for traveling

all the way from Weippe to give an intriguing presentation titled Fire Hearths and Historic Trails at the 1912 Center in Moscow. Gene and Mollie have been studying the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail for over a decade, and on this occasion they shared with the audience their techniques and methods for locating campsites and fire rings used by the explorers over two-hundred years ago! If you are interested in learning more about the Lolo Trail National Historic Landmark please contact us.

On Saturday March 5th the Mega-load of Music event swept through the streets of Moscow and landed at the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Palouse. With the Moscow Peace Band leading the way, the Mardi-Gras style party lasted close to midnight and featured musical acts Jeanne McHale, the Grateful Live and Idler's Rest. We would like to acknowledge Copy Court, Hyperspod Sports, Book People of Moscow and Wine Company of Moscow for helping make the event a rousing success. Next time we'll make sure to buy more beer!

You can listen to the Wild Clearwater Country radio show every Wednesday 4:00-5:00pm Pacific on KRFP Radio Free Moscow. A recent guest of ours was Karen Meyer of Green Fire Productions, the makers of numerous wildland documentaries, including The Lords of Nature: Life in a Land of Great Predators. The radio interview was a prelude to the showing of the film on March 7th at Lewis-Clark State College. We would like to thank Professor Chris Norden for showing the film and leading a discussion about the function of predators and why certain scientists believe they are crucial components of productive ecosystems and biodiversity.

Note: You can listen to the Wild Clearwater Country show at <http://www.krfp.org>. Just stream us through Windows Media Player or iTunes.



Snowshoeing on Lolo Pass with WSU
FOC File Photo

Exchange cont. from page 1

newspaper/radio/television, websites, brochures, and even a billboard donated by a FPRD member.

After the release of the flawed DEIS, FPRD sponsored informational meetings as the Forest Service held their own open houses. FPRD asked to participate in the Forest Service open houses, but was denied as being “a special interest group.” WPT and their co-partner Rocky Mt. Elk Foundation (RMEF) offered information at the FS meetings instead. At the Moscow FS open house, FPRD set up a table outside the Latah County Fairgrounds meeting area. FPRD’s being “left out in the cold” caused a surge in media attention. FPRD held subsequent meetings which were well attended. Retired PRD Ranger’s Larry Ross, John Krebs, Blake Ballard and others offered indispensable information to the public on issues, the NEPA process, and how to comment on the DEIS. The meetings were effective. The number of calls and emails to FPRD increased dramatically as a result. Beyond the proponents, FPRD has found no one who supports the exchange, except The Nature Conservancy.

FPRD, FOC, an impressive list of FS retirees and other groups have requested an extension of the original end comment date on the DEIS to give time for a public hearing. Clearwater Forest Supervisor Rick Brazell denied the hearing, extending the comment period two weeks which ended yesterday, March 9. FPRD submitted comment, securing standing in an appeal. The City of Moscow recently sent a memo to the Latah BOCC voicing their intention to submit comments.

FPRD has been told by Supervisor Brazell he expects an appeal, yet he feels strongly the FS needs to dispose of land. The anticipated Final EIS and Record of Decision is anticipated in late fall 2011. FPRD intends to continue rallying public opposition through every possible means, including extended media coverage and distribution of petitions. FPRD has contacted the USDA Inspector General to prompt an investigation into illegalities associated with the exchange.



Popular Recreation Lands on the PRD
Marilyn Beckett Photo

The Irreplaceable Meadow Creek Chris Norden

When we talk about favorite and especially important roadless areas on the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests, the Selway river tributary Meadow Creek often comes to mind, both for the importance of its low-elevation old-growth cedar habitat in the north section, and its unique geological characteristics, which in turn result in prime meadow habitat in the southern section due to lack of historical glaciation. As wildlife and fish habitat, Meadow Creek is invaluable, due to the diversity of its elevations and habitat types, and its premiere water quality. It is particularly valuable as anadromous fish habitat for steelhead and spring/summer Chinook salmon, as well as for threatened west-slope cut-throat trout and bull trout. The mix of slower and swifter waters, including the very gentle gradients of the meadow complexes, provide a whole host of species with a home and a chance for long-term survival.

Despite its current popularity as an easy-access ATV and motorcycling site, the 172,000-acre Meadow Creek roadless area was favored by the US Forest Service during the RARE II inventory of roadless wildlands and potential wildernesses in the 1970s and 80s. Effectively sacrificed and negotiated out of the 1980 wilderness bill that created the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, Meadow Creek finally secured a reasonable degree of protection when the 2001 Roadless Rule was enacted by the Clinton administration.

Now, however, Meadow Creek again appears to be a bargaining chip in the current Clearwater Basin Collaborative process, a non-democratic and non-inclusive attempt to divvy up roadless and other high value acreage on the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests. Under Idaho’s then-Governor Jim Risch’s 2008 Roadless rule, Meadow Creek moved back into a higher risk category, insofar as Risch’s rule allows more exemptions for logging, especially in the threatened western half, precisely the half that appears to now be on the table in the ongoing Clearwater Basin Collaborative negotiations.

The prospect of Meadow Creek being negotiated away in exchange for protection of other admittedly important public lands is not something we American citizens should take sitting down. As legal owners of these valuable lands—notably including the Meadow Creek roadless complex—we have the legal right to be involved in any and all decisions affecting those lands, as per the 1970 National Environmental Policy Act, which stipulates actual citizen input and involvement, not just

proxy representation in closed-door and backroom negotiations between select environmental groups, industry, motorized user groups, and state and local governmental representatives with a vested interest in developing or privatizing federal public lands.

To stand up in defense of Meadow Creek, you can first of all visit and spend time there, getting to know the area better via a backpack trip, a day hike, birdwatching, or anything that suits you. It's your land! Of particular importance is ATV monitoring, gathering documentation of motorized use and abuse of this roadless land. At present, motorized use is legal in much of the Meadow Creek roadless area, with the notable exception of #541 trail, which was put under an emergency closure by the Forest Service in 2008 thanks to the diligent work of FOC member and former board member James Holt, who documented severe erosion and related abuses caused by motorized users.

Regardless of whether you find or document any motorized abuses or degradation, you can contact the Forest Service and urge them to protect Meadow Creek as fully as possible, including closing the area to motorized use and recommending it for full wilderness protection. Important to specify full protection under 1964 Wilderness Act standards, as opposed to any of the watered-down compromise designations now in vogue with those supportive of so-called "collaborative" deal making. For insights into the difference between collaboration and resistance, I refer you to the history of occupied France 1940-45. Equally to the point, consider that virtually all of the significant conservation gains in 20th century America were the result of conservation heroes like Bob Marshall and Stewart Brandborg refusing to cut the baby in half in order to save it.

Finally, you can play an important role as a public advocate for Meadow Creek and various other as-yet unprotected or inadequately protected wildlands on the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests. The two forests are due to be combined administratively, within the next year and a half or so, under a single Supervisor and with a single set of rules and management directives. These rules and directives are articulated largely via an official Forest Plan and Travel Plan, which prioritize various uses and values in the former case, and define allowed and appropriate uses—especially motorized uses—in the latter case.

Public input into these ongoing planning processes is mandated, meaning your opinions, ideas, and inputs must be taken into consideration. The only wrong way to participate is to not participate, and clearly the worst forms of abuse include Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) use in roadless

areas, road-building in roadless areas, and industrial extraction of resources (timber and mining primarily) from roadless areas. Placing letters to the editor in local, regional, and statewide newspapers is another effective way of publicly advocating for Meadow Creek and other roadless publicly owned places in Idaho's Big Wild.

(Ed. Note: When the Forest Service inventoried Meadow Creek in the 1970s for potential wilderness designation, the agency erroneously omitted thousands of roadless acres. It was listed as a 172,000-acre study area. Today, the actual Meadow Creek roadless area is approximately 215,000 acres but was actually much larger in the 1970s. Road building and logging have reduced the acreage).



The Wonders of Meadow Creek
Chuck Pezeshki Photo

Wildlands Advocacy

visit our *monthly donor* link at
[http://www.friendsoftheclearwater.org/
 get-involved/donate](http://www.friendsoftheclearwater.org/get-involved/donate)
 thanks very much for
 keeping it wild!

Around the Clearwater Basin

Gary Macfarlane

It has been a very busy few months as threats in the Clearwater have mounted. FOC sent in comments on the massive Lochsa Land Exchange draft Environmental Impact Statement along with other groups-- Western Lands Project, Palouse Groups Sierra Club, the Lands Council and Alliance for the Wild Rockies (see related article this newsletter). We are advocating that the Forest Service drop the ill-advised exchange in favor of a purchase option, as it is important to return the upper Lochsa to public hands.

We are still waiting for the important decisions on travel plans from the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests and the St. Joe District of the Idaho Panhandle National Forest. The latest projection for the Clearwater plan is the end of April.

Wolves remain in the spotlight if not the cross-hairs. The legally and scientifically sound ruling from Judge Molloy last year, that wolves must be put back onto the Endangered Species list at least until Wyoming produces an acceptable wolf management plan, was good news. However, some members of Congress have threatened to overturn these protections for wolves, essentially renegeing on the recovery plan. The groups who brought the lawsuit, including Friends of the Clearwater, discussed the pros and cons of a settlement with the Department of Interior and what would constitute an ecologically sound settlement. Some organizations decided to agree to a settlement with the Interior Department, but others including Friends of the Clearwater, Western Watersheds Project and Alliance for the Wild Rockies felt that the Interior Department's proposed settlement fell far short of sound legal mandates and ecological necessity. Besides, there is no guarantee this settlement will stop any potential congressional action or that potential Congressional action would be significantly worse than the settlement. The issue is unfolding as we go to press.

We want to thank EarthJustice for representing all of the plaintiff groups on this issue until differences among the groups dictated that new representation had to be obtained by each of the groups. It has been the intransigence of the State of Wyoming in preparing an acceptable wolf plan and the lack of commitment to wolf recovery from the State of Idaho, and to a lesser degree Montana, that have enabled the current poisonous political landscape regarding wolves.

The Forest Service has proposed numerous smaller timber sales, prescribed fires, watershed improvement and other projects over the past few months. While some of these projects are positive, others could have negative

impacts on the environment. If you want more information about these proposals, please contact the FOC office.

The Forest Service has also proposed numerous projects inside wilderness, including bridge replacement using helicopters. Friends of the Clearwater, Wilderness Watch, and the Alliance for the Wild Rockies challenged the Forest Service to replace the Three Links Bridge with non-motorized means, as was done when the bridge was originally built. Also, Friends of the Clearwater and Wilderness Watch are working with the Forest Service to try and implement wilderness character monitoring in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

FOC has been gathering information from various state and federal agencies on a variety of projects that affect the Lochsa and Middle Fork Clearwater Rivers including a diesel spill that occurred on the Lochsa late last year and deteriorating road conditions on Highway 12 this past winter. The mega-loads proposed to go up Highway 12 only exacerbate the problems. For example, FOC fears the state and federal agencies circumvented normal clean-up procedures on the diesel spill because they didn't want to block the route for potential mega-load traffic. Normally, the roadbed is dug up during diesel spills on Highway 12 to remove the oil seeping under the road and into the river.

Speaking of the threats to the Clearwater from the proposed mega-loads carrying tar sands equipment, we have been active in participating with Nez Perce tribal members in voicing opposition to using Highway 12 along the Middle Fork Clearwater and Lochsa. A run/walk from Lewiston to Heart of the Monster in Kamiah—the location of the Nez Perce creation story--was held in March in solidarity with First Nations people in northeastern Alberta. These people are bearing the brunt of the devastation from tar sands development.

FOC has been awarded intervener status in the Idaho Transportation Department's administrative hearing process challenging the 200 plus mega-loads destined for Alberta. This is a way we are adding to the good work of citizens in the Clearwater Valley and local businesses (see www.fightinggoliath.org) contesting the decision by the Idaho Transportation Department to issue travel permits.

Finally, BLM temporarily closed the sheep grazing allotments in the Warren area just south of the Salmon River. This was done to prevent disease transmission to bighorn sheep.

Contact us at

foc@friendsoftheclearwater.org

to receive the **Big Wild Bi-Weekly**.

**The Fisher Deserves To Be
Listed Under The ESA
Steve Paulson**

One fall day, several years ago, I was trying to follow a bull elk track through a high elevation tributary of Monroe Creek, miles from any road. The under-story was dense dwarf elm, mixed with huckleberry and ocean spray. The over-story was old growth red fir/grand fir that had survived the 1910 Big Burn. I was moving very slow and careful to not make a sound. When the elk track came to the riparian area in the bottom of the valley, I had trouble following it in the swampy creek-bottom. I slowly, quietly crossed and re-crossed the riparian area several times to try to sort out the elk's path.

As I stood there, trying to make sense of the trail, an odd, fluffy, brown "animal" approached me. It was as big as a well-fed house cat but decidedly longer, with skinny (dare I say "beady") black eyes set above a sharp, black, whiskered nose, and a long, trailing, bushy tail. It leap-frogged towards me on the downfall, leapt onto a six-inch leaning deadfall which led over my right shoulder, stopped briefly at face level to look me in the eye, moved onto the large fir tree I was standing beside, jumped across to a nearby tree, and scampered down another deadfall. Un-perturbed and without a backward glance, it continued moving up the creek bottom, mostly on an elevated path using the downfall above the swampy ground and fading into a cherished memory. It was a fisher.

Also known as *Martes pennanti*, the fisher is a very unusual animal. The fisher is a member of the weasel family, closely related to the marten, but bigger, stronger and darker. It is the size of an average house cat, with a brown fur coat, and is one of the few animals that successfully hunt porcupines. This rare forest carnivore is prized by trappers for its thick, soft fur, and by timber companies for controlling porcupine populations that can damage valuable trees. Fishers need large and connected wildlands where the trees are left standing, since they depend on mature and old-growth forests to hunt for their prey and to provide protected sites above the forest floor where they can be safe and raise their young. Den sites are large cavities in large diameter trees, averaging 100 feet from the ground.

The fisher is very rare, probably more rare than other medium-sized forest predators, the lynx and wolverine. There are no good population estimates, but 500 of each within the entire U.S. northern Rockies are one ballpark figure. Probably the actual numbers are far fewer. The only significant fisher population still known to persist in the U.S. portion of the Rocky Mountains is in our

Clearwater area of north-central Idaho and the adjacent Bitterroot Mountains in Montana. Fishers still exist in other areas of Idaho and western Montana, but they are sparse in these areas and their population status is unknown. Fishers and their habitat were once contiguous across the northern forests of the United States and Canada.

Fisher populations in the Northern Rockies are known to be genetically isolated from each other and from other fisher populations in North America, which greatly increases their risk of extinction. Ongoing loss and fragmentation of their habitat and human-caused mortality puts them even more at risk. Logging and outbreaks of fire, insects and disease have vastly reduced and isolated their habitat. Mortality due to trapping and poisoning eliminated fishers from much of their range historically. You may be as surprised as I to learn that the state of Montana still allows legal trapping seasons for this rare animal. Throughout the fisher's range, traps set for other fur-bearing species "incidentally take" fisher. The fisher's low numbers, its low reproductive rate, the isolation of its small populations in the Northern Rockies, and their isolation from populations outside the Northern Rockies all threaten the fisher's continued existence in the Northern Rockies. Suffice it to say that fishers in the Northern Rockies are in immediate danger of extinction.

In 2009, the Defenders of Wildlife, Center for Biological Diversity, Friends of the Bitterroot, and Friends of the Clearwater filed a petition with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) demanding that the fisher be immediately listed as Endangered or Threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This is the second attempted petition to protect fishers in the Northern Rockies under the ESA. The Bush administration found that the first petition was "not warranted."



Fisher

John Jacobson photo, courtesy Washington Dept. Fish and Wildlife and Northwest Trek

Heart of the Monster

By Rick Bass and David James Duncan

Produced as a rapid response to pressure from Big Oil, this lyrical two-part book explains “why the Pacific northwest and northern Rockies must not become an Exxon/Imperial Oil conduit to the Alberta tar sands.” Weaving fiction, mythology, poetry, fly fishing and fact, the authors describe their passion, not just for the river and its scenic corridor, but for the people and planet impacted by the greedy plan to pervert historic routes in Idaho and Montana into “tar sands tentacles.” Published by the Missoula group All Against the Haul, this book, as stated in the foreword, is more spiritual solace than exposé.

In the first half, Duncan reveals the Nez Perce creation story highlighted by the book’s title, and reminds us of the Jungian notion of myth as a “hyper-fact.” Another big monster now threatens to swallow the people and animals who love and live in this wild country. In the second half, Bass weaves a story around his (fictional?) relationship with the governor of Montana, who gave the go-ahead for the megaloads to roll through Montana. Both halves of the book, despite the discouraging nature of the topic, seem poised on the cusp of a divine struggle. The book is available at Bookpeople in Moscow and is recommended for all who are seeking the necessary inspiration to continue this struggle.

Reviewed by Jeanne McHale

Walking the Big Wild

By Karsten Heuer

A truly dynamic read that takes you along the path of the Grizzly bear from Yellowstone to the Yukon (Y2Y) and gives one a sense of wildness, vigor and hope. Inspired by Reed Noss and Michael Soule’s vision of connecting parks and wilderness areas with biological corridors and transition zones, Canadian wildlife biologist Karsten Heuer spends two summers hiking, skiing and canoeing across some of the last wild places in North America. With serious threats from urban sprawl, road building, logging, strip mining and oil drilling, Heuer discovers that it is still possible to establish a Reserve Network Design for native plants and animals to roam and flourish. This 256-page book (2002) will leave you itching to explore the rolling foothills, inland rainforests, mountain slopes, and alpine landscapes of the Rocky Mountains this summer!

Reviewed by Brett Haverstick

Fifty Miles of Pain To Raise Money for FOC

FOC member Dana Johnson is taking on the Wild Idaho 50 Mile trail run (WIFMER) to raise money for Friends of the Clearwater. The run is a challenging 50-mile jaunt through the Boise National Forest and sports a healthy 16,000 feet of vertical elevation gain. The Race Director, Ben Blessing, boasts that this is one tough ultra marathon that will leave runners “crying for mommy.” Ben has this to say about his race: “I created the event and held it in August to ensure maximum cruelty of the elements. Along with the long climbs and heat, the WIFMER is bound to be one of the toughest (if not the toughest) 50-milers in the nation.”

The WIFMER is definitely a wild race. And in honor of those who protect our wild places, Dana is requesting donations per mile for her bout against the WIFMER. All donations will benefit Friends of the Clearwater and its work to keep Idaho wild. You can find more information on donations and about the race at:

<http://www.causes.com/causes/561166-keeping-it-wild-friends-of-the-clearwater-fundraiser/about>.



Dana Runs for Wildness

Dana Johnson Photo

This summer we will resume our work with Wildlands CPR to decommission roads and restore wildlife habitat on the Clearwater National Forest.

If you are interested in **volunteering** and helping with this **field-based project** email us at

foc@friendsoftheclearwater.org.

In Memoriam

Friends of the Clearwater lost some friends these past few months.

Jerry Dixon was an intrepid long-distance hiker and wild-land advocate. Jerry participated in the Sawtooth to Selkirk Hike that Friends of the Clearwater sponsored in 2001 in which Josh Burnim hiked from the Sawtooths in Idaho to the Selkirk Mountains in British Columbia. Jerry was also at the forefront of Idaho conservation battles the past 30 years or so. He most recently lived in Alaska with his family. Our sympathies go to Deborah, Jerry's wife, and the rest of their friends and family.

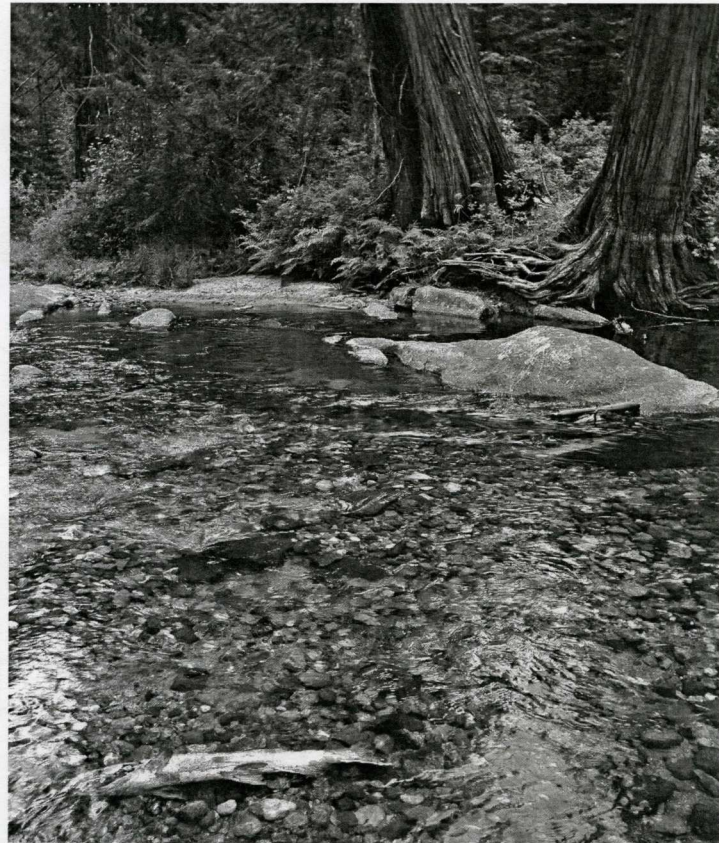
Lois Bradury of Moscow, Idaho loved the mountains of Idaho. She was a long-time employee of the College of Education at the University of Idaho. Her wish was to have her ashes scattered in Idaho's mountains. Our condolences go to her husband, Bruce Bradbury, the noted Northwest Public Radio announcer and to the rest of her friends and family. Moscow has lost a stellar citizen.

Other Notable Passings

Bud Moore, the former ranger of the Powell Ranger District and author of the *The Lochsa Story - Land Ethics in the Bitterroot Mountains* passed away in Montana at the age of 93. He was a great storyteller and knew the Bitterroot Mountains very well. He appreciated wilderness at a time when it wasn't very popular within the agency to do so.

John Barker, a long-time river advocate recently passed away. He was a retired professor from Lewis-Clark State College. He bravely advocated for dam removal on the lower Snake River dams. He was instrumental in seeking protection for the Salmon River and other wild rivers in Idaho. Idaho rivers will miss this strong advocate.

Don McPherson was a long-time conservation officer ending his career in the Clearwater country. He was an avid backcountry horse rider and served in several volunteer capacities in the community. He was born in Kooskia and was a World War II navy veteran.



Salmon after spawning, Wild Clearwater
Chuck Pezeshki Photo

GET LOCAL PERSPECTIVES
ON CONSERVATION ISSUES
FROM YOUR COMMUNITY
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COUNTRY
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Wednesdays from 4 to 5 p.m.
on 92.5 FM Radio Free Moscow
<http://www.krfp.org>

Megaloads: A Giga Issue

Rob Briggs

The battle to keep mega-loads off US 12, and cutting through the heart of the Clearwater, has all the ingredients of an epic drama. There is the beauty—the Lochsa and Clearwater Rivers—with all of the best pedigree: wild and scenic river(s), a designated scenic byway, the Lewis and Clark trail, a whitewater Mecca and world-class tourism destination. The place is cherished by many.

Pitted against 'the Big Wild' and her plucky band of defenders are some of the most powerful interests on the globe and arguably some of its most sinister. At the heart of the battle is Exxon/Imperial Oil, one of the world's largest corporations. Exxon, through its Canadian subsidiary Imperial Oil, is engaged in strip mining the Athabasca tar sands and wants a 'high and wide' corridor to enable it to exploit low-cost Korean labor for manufacturing tar-sands equipment.

Tar sands are a low-grade replacement for conventional crude oil, the world supply of which appears to be entering a permanent state of decline due to depletion. Production of oil from tar sands requires enormous quantities of water and heat, which currently is being provided using natural gas. Carbon emissions from tar sands (per unit of usable energy) are very high—comparable to coal. Yet the tar sands resource is enormous, occupying in northern Alberta alone an area the size of Florida. Tar sands are central to a debate over our nation's energy future that roils just below the surface.

To date, the megaloads debate has turned on transportation safety, local business impacts, and quality-of-life concerns. But have we lost sight of the mega-loads' role in a much more profound threat to The Big Wild?

In February, atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations stood at 391.76 parts per million (ppm), up 40% from the pre-industrial level of 280. That increase is due primarily to the burning of fossil fuels. Estimated remaining world reserves of conventional fossil fuels total about 800 gigatons of carbon. Burn it all, and atmospheric carbon goes to about 800 ppm. Unconventional fossil fuels, like tar sands, could force levels even higher. Projections show the average global temperature could rise from its current 59F to 100F or higher. Significant environmental changes have resulted from the roughly 1.5F increase to date, so it is frightening to think what changes an additional 40F rise would bring.

For the Clearwater basin, continued warming will mean the loss of winter snow pack. This, combined with higher summer temperatures, is likely to increase the size, frequency, and intensity of wild fires. Disease vectors, once controlled by low winter temperatures, will

adversely affect forest health. Our dominant, high-altitude conifer, lodgepole pine forest type, is already marked for extinction throughout most of the northern Rockies due to warming. Also threatened will be numerous fish species, as we lose the cold, clear water on which they depend.

Use of conventional crude oil will inevitably decline over the coming decades due to resource depletion. That is why climate activists are now focused on fighting carbon emissions from coal, which represents the largest and dirtiest reservoir of conventional fossil fuel. Nonconventional fossil fuels—tar sands, oil shales, methane hydrates, etc.—must be left in the ground if we are to leave behind a recognizable planet. Governments around the world have accepted these facts. In 1992 a UN conference in Rio de Janeiro produced the Framework Convention on Climate Change, a treaty that committed the nations of the world to work cooperatively to protect the world's climate by reducing carbon emissions. The accord has been ratified by 194 nations including Canada and the United States, the latter with bi-partisan support.

The great promise of Rio in 1992 has given way to gloom and foreboding in Copenhagen in 2009. A public relations campaign so dark and cynical it must have been forged in the caves of Mordor is primarily responsible. The definitive exposé is yet to be written, but millions of dollars are known to have flowed from the coffers of Exxon/Imperial Oil to disseminators of disinformation in a campaign so pervasive and effective one climate scientist described it as a "reversal of the enlightenment."

The Athabasca River meanders northward from the toe of the Athabasca Glacier in Jasper National Park into Rivière des Rochers, and eventually the Arctic Ocean. The only ones downstream to object to the toxic substances that tar sands operations add to the water and fish are First Nations peoples, whose rights have been ignored for hundreds of years. For most Americans, the Athabasca tar sands are out of sight and out of mind.

But I like to think that Exxon/Imperial Oil has stumbled into an ambush here on the Clearwater. We could not ask for more favorable ground on which to fight the mega-loads, the tar sands, and the larger energy policies that threaten our planet. The Clearwater is beautiful, historic, and photogenic; the mega-loads are alien, chilling, and out of scale in this place. The controversy has already shown it can garner national attention.

Exxon has misplayed its hand. The hubris it displayed in bringing thirty-four enormous loads to the Port of Lewiston without obtaining permits for further transport is staggering. Clearly they were confident they could 'roll the yokels' with a free home generator here and a flagger job there, and turn our politicians into servile, lap dogs

with a few thousand dollars each in political contributions. Could a victory here on the Clearwater embolden those opposing proposed tar-sands oil pipelines in the American Midwest, or native peoples fighting tar sands projects in Canada, or even those fighting mountain-top removal in the coal fields of West Virginia? Recently in the Middle East, we've seen how infectious hope can be. No one can predict when (or even if) the American people will awaken from their stupor on these issues. But one thing is certain: you will never have a more important environmental battle show up on your doorstep. Get involved!

Mega-load Update
Brett Haverstick

Keeping track of all the comings and goings of the mega-load debacle in the Clearwater Valley is a major task. This summary will hopefully provide you with answers.

It took more than 30 days for Conoco-Phillips to haul their first two mega-loads up U.S. 12 in February. Their hazardous adventure included scraping rock faces, tearing down tree limbs, traveling through snowstorms, and causing traffic delays up to 1 hour 15 minutes. They plan on jamming their last two mega-loads up U.S. 12 in late April, despite white-water boating season starting on the Lochsa.

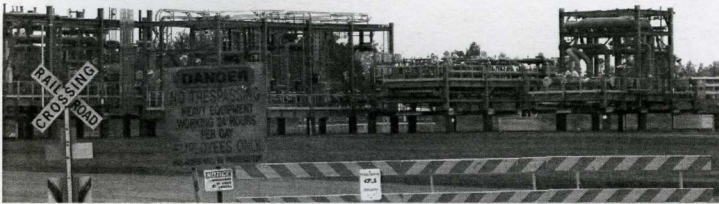
Recently Exxon/Imperial Oil announced they were going to begin reducing the size of thirty-three oil processing modules at the Port of Lewiston and seek an alternative trucking route. The route may be US 95, which would bring them through Moscow. Exxon/Imperial Oil claims U.S. 12 is still their preferred route, but the loads cannot travel up that highway until the contested case hearing occurs. The Idaho Transportation Department is allowing one full-size "test-load" to travel up U.S. 12 in early April.

Similar to the ConocoPhillips hearing, there will be an Exxon/Imperial Oil contested case hearing in Idaho. The hearing will begin in Boise on Monday April 25th. Friends of the Clearwater has been granted Intervener status and we look forward to the opportunity. Advocates for the West will be representing all interveners in the case.

Idaho Rivers United has filed a lawsuit in federal district court against the U.S. Forest Service, claiming the agency has failed in their duties to "protect and enhance" the Wild & Scenic Middle Fork Clearwater and Lochsa River corridor. A lawsuit was also recently filed against the Montana Transportation Department for their approval of the Exxon/Imperial Oil project.

Nez Perce tribal members have also recently stepped up their efforts to oppose the invasion of mega-loads across their land. A number of meetings, marches and demonstrations have been successfully organized and we would like to recognize them for their actions.

All Against the Haul and the Northern Rockies Rising Tide of Missoula have also been working extremely hard to oppose the mega-load invasion. There have been a number of rallies in the state of Montana since the mega-loads began making it over Lolo Pass. We thank them for all their efforts.



Exxon Mega-loads Destined for the Tar Sands
FOC File Photo



Nez Perce March to the Heart of the Monster
Matti Sand Photo

Landscape Architecture students from the University Idaho & Washington State University will present **Mega: Big Visions for the Clearwater Basin** at the 1912 Center in Moscow on **Monday April 25th** from 5:30-8:30pm. Multi-media student designs will reflect alternatives to and impacts from oil processing mega-load equipment traveling across the region.



Citizen Rally at the Port of Lewiston
 FOC File Photo

FRIENDS OF THE CLEARWATER CALENDAR OF EVENTS
 SPRING 2011

CREPES AND FRUIT PREP
 FOR MOSCOW RENAISSANCE FAIR
 SATURDAY APRIL 16TH 11-5PM
 MOSCOW JR. HIGH SCHOOL

MOSCOW RENAISSANCE FAIR
 EAST CITY PARK MOSCOW
 ALL DAY SATURDAY APRIL 30TH/SUNDAY MAY 1ST
 SCRUMPTIOUS HUCKLEBERRY/STRAWBERRY CREPES & HOT CIDER
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P.O. Box 9241
Moscow, Idaho 83843

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