

# THE SELWAY PATROL

KOOSKIA, IDAHO.



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SELMAY PATROL  
SELMAY NATIONAL FOREST

Kooskia, Idaho

February 1, 1918

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Frank A. Penn	Forest Supervisor	Kooskia, Idaho
Ernest E. Shank	Forest Clerk	Kooskia, Idaho

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DISTRICTS

Tahoe	Shelton I. McPherson	P.R.	Clearwater, Idaho
Middle Fork	Joseph McGhee	A.F.R.	Kooskia, Idaho
Pete King	Frank S. Rogers	A.F.R.	Lowell, Idaho
Castle	Thomas S. Beckliff	A.F.R.	Lowell, Idaho
Powell	Frank J. Smith	A.F.R.	Hole Act Springs, Montana.
Elk Summit	Adolph Geholt	A.F.R.	Hamilton, Mont.
Three Forks	Louis Fitting	A.F.R.	Lowell, Idaho
Coolwater	James D. Agnew	A.F.R.	Lowell, Idaho
Fish Lake	Ray R. Fitting	A.F.R.	Lowell, Idaho

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## SALUTATORY

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It is with diffidence that the Selway Patrol presents itself in the goodly company of Foresters and Rangers now assembled in the Publication Department of District One. The Service would find it difficult, however, perfectly to fulfill its mission were its superior officers unsupported by an active Patrol which, while its functions are humble are nevertheless important.

The Selway Forest is less fortunately situated than many others. It has not the advantages incident to proximity to large centers of population. Manufacturing industries have not yet been established within or even near it and all transportation here must still be confined to the primitive pack train. In spite of these unfavorable conditions, the Patrol feels that there is in the Selway Forest a wide field wherein the Service may begin at the beginning, may commence its work of conserving the forests in a region where vandalism has not defaced Nature's handiwork, and, by adherence to fundamental principles, in the course of years, demonstrate the excellence of the system of conserving the forests advocated by scientific forestry. The Service finds here virgin soil ready for its plow, if the harvest be disappointing the fault will rest with the husbandman or the method of cultivation. The perplexing questions presented in any National Forest where human

agencies have changed natural conditions, where the demands of industrial activity are many and insistent, or where mis-directed effort has enhanced the difficulties of management are wholly absent here. At present the Service must contend with the forces of Nature only but in this contest it must prepare for what will be encountered when Nature is reinforced by the art and strength of advancing civilization.

The only problem confronting the Service here at this time is the protection of what it has, so that the resources of the Forest may, in good time, yield the greatest benefits. Important sales of timber are prospective only; reforestation will be effected without artificial means if Nature be given a chance to apply her own methods; the pasturing of grazing areas is something that must be postponed for the future; and the utilization of water power can only be accomplished when sites are accessible. If the vast forests of the Selway can be protected from fire and insect pests until, through the development of lines of communication and transportation, all sections are made accessible, then their wonderful resources will be appreciated at their true worth and the Selway will be ready for the application of scientific forestry to avoid the destructive agencies that have wrought havoc in so many parts of the country where the Service is now striving to repair the damage caused by abuse of Nature's bounty.

The patrol will aim to disseminate information for the benefit of all and to keep its readers advised on topics of general interest to the Service. It will, nevertheless, be essentially a local publication devoting its pages chiefly to a discussion of the questions of protective management, improvement and development, which is of primary importance in those undeveloped unproductive regions of which the Selway Forest is typical

#### IMPROVEMENTS.

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Now that the working season of 1911 is ended we may take a survey of the field and see what has been done in the several ranger districts since the beginning of the current fiscal year and ascertain how far, if at all, we have fallen short of carrying out the plans proposed for the season. If we have not done those things we ought to have done what has been the cause of our failure? Have the different branches of the work not been properly coordinated? Has there been inadequate supervision? Have District Rangers trusted too much to the judgment and discretion of their subordinates in the field? Has slack time contributed to want of success? To what extent has lost

motion made results unsatisfactory? These questions are all important to the office and the field force alike and it is only by the most careful consideration of all of them that greater efficiency can be attained. Future operations to be what we should have them, must be carried on in the light of experience. With the aid of most imperfect manuals only to guide us, we are engaged in the development of a primitive forest. And as we progress we must profit by the fruits of inexperience. Thus viewing the situation we can not hope for improvement until we realize that frank and candid admission of error is far better than self serving excuses for mistake.

MIDDLE FORK DISTRICT.

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A very substantial shed 16 feet wide recently built, as an addition, on the south side of the hay barn affords comfortable stall room for eight horses. An extension of the shed on the east end of the barn is used for sheltering the Service wagon and the farming implements used at the station. The feed corral has been greatly improved by the removal of all stumps and the blasting out of a lot of large boulders. The corral with the feed racks available makes it possible to care for the pack animals easily and economically whenever the pack train has to lay over here. The completion of the new blacksmith shop at the station was very pleasing to our packers since it enabled them to have the pack animals shod up quickly while the men were putting up cargo for the next trip.

A good deal of betterment work has been done on the Middle Fork section of the Selway trail in the way of widening the tread in places and removing large rocks that had been exposed by constant travel. The cutting out of the trail from the station to Hood Rat Mountain has been finished and there remains only a little more grading on a few steep hillsides to make this a first-class 8 per cent trail to the important Hood Rat Lookout. Wire for the

telephone line to this lookout has been strung out and simply needs connecting with the instrument to finish the job.

Half an acre more of land has been cleared adjoining the lower field and made ready for seeding in the spring. A wagon road intended for use in the transportation of hay from the "Hill Field" to the barn has been surveyed from the barn lot to the field a quarter of a mile distant. To keep the cost within reasonable bounds the road had to be run on a 10 per cent grade and even with this there will be considerable powder work required on two rocky points. As loads will have to be hauled down hill only the steepness of the grade is not a serious matter. Clearing of the right of way for the road is now in progress.

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THE PETE KING DISTRICT.

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A good deal of trail work has been accomplished in this district during the season just closed. The trail 12 miles long from Wood Rat Mountain, along the boundary between the Clearwater and Galway Forests, to connect with the Pete King Trail near the 21 mile post was carefully looked out and blazed and some three miles opened up. There are no



heavy grades on the route. When completed, the trail will shorten the distance between the Middle Fork station and Cedar Camp at least two miles and will be especially valuable for patrol purposes as it gives a chance for a good view of the Pete King basin in the Selway, and of the Eldorado basin in the Clearwater Forest. Another much needed patrol trail was looked out and blazed from the Pete King trail along the main divide between Fish Creek and Canyon Creek to McLendon Butte. The opening of this trail will involve little more than the removal of brush and down timber. The trail up the Lochsa river via Bear Meadows to the mouth of Fish Creek was cleared out and considerably improved by the removal of obstructions which were disregarded by the railway surveying crews that first laid out the route. Between the station and Lowell Post Office the trail has been relocated in places so as to entirely avoid several steep pitches that formerly worried pack horses. A new trail route was surveyed from the mouth of Pete King Creek to the Rye Patch station and run on a uniform grade of 10 per cent. The distance is  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles as surveyed and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles have been brushed out ready for grading. Brushing was suspended on account of deep snow but will be resumed and finished in the early spring.

The Cedar Creek cabin has been put in good shape for the storage of tools and is now well supplied with equipment for a goodly crew of men.

At the headquarters station  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres additional land has been cleared ready for crops next spring and pickets split for

for a ground line has been distributed to connect Castle Butte lookout with the main line east of Bald Mountain station and a set of house logs and necessary shakes have been gotten out and everything is ready for the building of a good cabin at Castle Butte lookout when work starts next season. The main line of telephone was extended this season from Bald Mountain station to Indian Grave, a distance of seven miles.

The Rocky Ridge cabin has been floored and otherwise improved so that it is now comfortable and conveniently arranged for the Guards and patrolmen on duty at this station.

Three trappers are now operating in this district under permit and they report satisfactory fur catches during the early part of the winter.

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THE ELK SUMMIT DISTRICT.

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This is one of the districts remote and difficult of access. The altitude is such that in the greater part of the district the working season is restricted to three and one-half or four months. A trail plan has been carefully thought out and is being closely adhered to in all the extension and improvement work. Eight miles of the main trail leading from Moose Creek to Blodgett Pass through the middle of the district was completed the past season. The right of way is cut 16 feet wide and with careful clearing makes a good fire lane. Fifteen miles

of this main trail remain to build and it is calculated that it will be finished next season. A first rate route for a trail from the district headquarters to Graves Peak, a distance of 9 miles, was looked out and the entire line blazed. Three miles were cut out through a heavy windfall of down lodgepole and spruce timber. The balance of the way will be easy of construction. This trail when completed will afford an easy approach from headquarters to the best primary lookout point in the forest, one that is now very difficult of access.

The anticipation of years has at last been realized and this district now has a good comfortable headquarters cabin 15 x 19 feet in size with walls 9 feet from floor to ceiling. It is built of logs hewed on one side to make smooth inside walls. Lumber for flooring and all other finishing was whipsawed and hand dressed. Windows and other finishings were packed over the Blodgett Pass from Hamilton, Montana. Wire to connect the headquarters station with the Grave Peak lookout and with the main telephone line on the Selway river is now stored at Three Forks ready for line construction in the spring.

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THE POELL DISTRICT.

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Improvement of the protective system in this district was pushed this year. Such work being made possible by the favorable fire season. The whole of the Lolo Trail

from the west line of the district to the Lolo Pass was put in first-class condition while the trail from the head of Weir Creek to the Lochsa and thence up the river to the headquarters station was cleared out and is now in good shape. The heavy fires of 1910 practically obliterated the old trail from the station to Graves Peak and a new line has been looked out and cleared. Several routes were tentatively examined but the one finally adopted is thought the most feasible all things, including cost of construction, being considered. The trail leading from headquarters to the Lolo Pass was repaired and greatly benefitted by the rebuilding of many small bridges and stretches of corduroy that had become seriously damaged by constant use. The short life, not more than 2 years, of the bridges and corduroys originally put in along this trail by the U. S. Surveying crews was an object lesson to Forest officers of the futility of makeshift work in trail construction.

At district headquarters we now have a good hewed log house in course of building. The main part is 14 x 28 feet inside on the ground with walls 15 feet giving the lower rooms 8 foot and the upper rooms 7 foot ceilings, and has an "L" addition for kitchen and dining room 11½ x 12 feet, single story. The walls are up, the roof is in place, partitions in, chinking finished and door and window openings made. Lumber for finishing the house has been gotten out and hand dressed and is now stored for thorough seasoning. The building will be completed next year. What has been done thus far has been accomplished without

resort to the Improvement Fund and by regular force at times when inclement weather allowed temporary relaxation from usual and commonly more urgent duty.

Mr. Kube, a trapper, who happened to be camping at the station last spring, at just the right season of the year prepared and planted a fine garden for the use of the rangers and guards. His work was prompted by kindly feeling for the Service and was most highly appreciated by the Forest officers who profited by his friendly act. Vegetables sufficient to supply ranger Smith for the winter were harvested in addition to a large amount of early stuff gathered during the summer and fall.

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#### FISH LAKE DISTRICT.

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There was rejoicing throughout the entire personnel when the Selway Trail that has been absorbing the attention of the Supervisor and Rangers for nearly seven years was finally completed this season to its objective point, the Three Forks. The last section, about 2 miles in length, was hard to build and cost \$1761.99, \$238.01 less than the estimate for it and \$261.99 more than the allotment granted. The trail from beginning to end is a fraction over 50 miles long and has cost the Service about \$20,000.00 including ranger labor expended before liberal improvement allotments became habitual.

For the first time in the history of the Selway Forest the use of a labor saving machine was this season tried. A Jackson hand rock-drill, humorously dubbed by the boys, "Gila Monster," was purchased and used on the heavy rock work encountered in the building of the last two mile section of the Selway Trail. The machine reached the ground so late in the season that a thorough test of it could not be made, but so far as it was tried out it was entirely satisfactory. Two men are required to operate the drill and with it they could drive holes for blasting fully twice as fast as they could by hand drilling. It is found that special tools must be kept at the blacksmith shop for the dressing of drills used with the machine. In this respect our equipment was deficient this year.

An excellent route has been surveyed and opened from the district headquarters at "62 Camp" down the mountain to Rhoads Creek connecting there with the old line of the Two Lake-62 Trail. The new out-off not only shortens the distance between termini but cuts out the steep hills that formerly made the trail connecting the two points a terror to travellers.

Some 35 miles of old trail was cleared out through the section of the district where the fires of 1910 had caused an immense number of trees to fall and obstruct the way. There has never been a well defined route laid out from Lost Knife Meadow to Graves Peak until this season. This year a trail was blazed through after careful reconnoitering and a line was found that avoids the worst hills and that will require relatively little heavy grade work. The route is about twelve miles long and passes

through a region in which good feed for animals is found at convenient points. Some 4 miles of this trail was completed this year. It will be finished through next season.

Material is now on the ground for the construction of the telephone line from the headquarter station to Three Forks station where it will connect with the through line running along the Selwai river. Had wire and other material reached the field a little earlier this branch line could have been put in commission this season.

A good cabin has just been finished at the district headquarters. It was difficult on account of the scarcity of suitable timber to get the best of logs for this cabin which is 14 x 24 feet with 11 foot walls. The excessive snowfall here made it advisable to build a comparatively narrow cabin. There is no one at the station during the winter to keep the roof free from snow such a structure had to be erected as would resist great weight without injury. All lumber for flooring and for doors and other finishing was shipsawed and hand dressed.

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THREE FORKS DISTRICT.

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The damage done at our headquarter station by the fire in 1910 has been but partially repaired. Five thousand rails were destroyed and the barn building burned. This season a good rail corral enclosing about one-half acre of ground was built for the handling of pack trains and ranger's horses, but nothing beyond this has been accomplished at the station. Timothy seed that had

A TRIBUTE TO THE FOREST RANGER.

By  
A. Strohecker -- U.S.G. Survey.

Ranger of the Forest, long shall live thy honored name;  
Great has been thy service, with ne'er a tinge of shame.  
Men as tough as sinew are all you sturdy mountaineers,  
You fight the forest fires and know no coward fears.

A king may well feel jealous of your masterly control,  
And wandering Arabs can not equal your patrol.  
As if a brother, by you the wild beast is protected;  
In your humble cabin, no one's are neglected.

No place is found too rugged for the blazes of your trail,  
Your forest fire warnings are seen in every vale.  
The lines of dots and dashes you can follow like a bell,  
Whether they lead skyward or downward point, all's well.

Ranger of the Forest, the meed of fame shall sure be thine  
Unselfish pioneer, full soon shall we entwine  
The leader's garland on you, for your guiding star's the R  
You lead, we follow as the day time follows night.