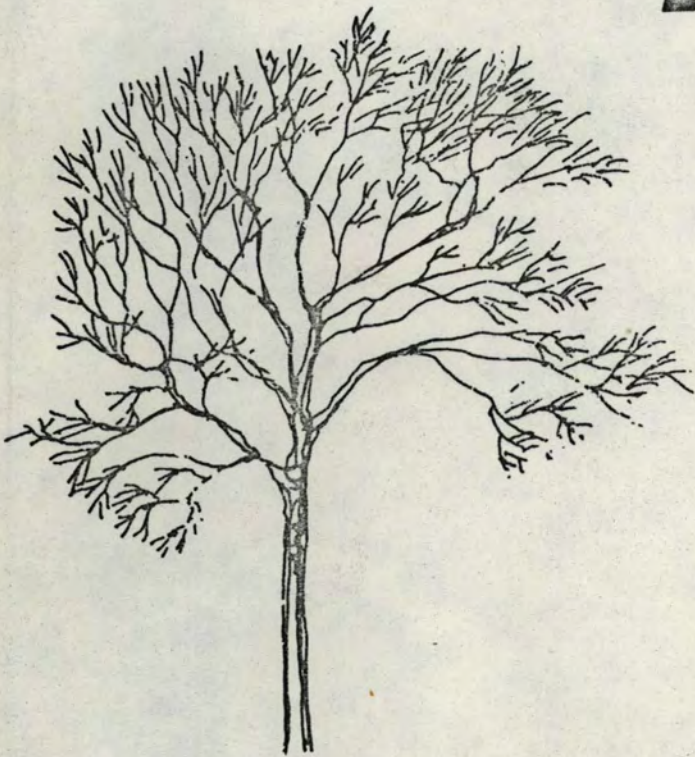


Wilderness

Research

Center



UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

WILDERNESS RESEARCH CENTER
College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences
University of Idaho

PROGRESS REPORT
Prepared by Floyd L. Newby, Director

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I. OVERVIEW STATEMENT

Assumption of the Directorship of the Wilderness Research Center was done with a certain amount of uncertainty regarding the overall direction and purposes of the Center. Prior to coming to the University of Idaho, my only experience with wilderness was at a policy formulation level and only then as applied to primitive areas. This situation proved to be somewhat of a disadvantage as research problems were being identified. To rectify this, it was decided that the first field season would be devoted to gaining first-hand experience with wilderness resources and associated management problems as perceived by managers, policy makers, user groups and other researchers.

Shortly after arriving at Moscow, a trip was taken to the Taylor Ranch for familiarization with that facility. The controversial events which occurred under the previous director were identified as were other apparent political involvements emanating from several levels and directions. As the result of the apparent sensitivity associated with the Taylor Ranch, a meeting was held between Dean Ehrenreich, Ken Sowles and myself in which it was decided that if the Center was to function

unencumbered by past events associated with Taylor Ranch, it would be necessary to disassociate the two. At that time, I was in full agreement with that decision, primarily because of an incomplete understanding of the total situation and because of the lack of the necessary contacts with those having interest in or involvement with the purchase and subsequent use of the Taylor Ranch. However, I must emphasize my own feeling about the potential and the obvious value of the Ranch for possible wilderness-related research. Perhaps of equal value is the potential of the Ranch as a cultural resource associated with a "wilderness" environment.

Beginning July 1, 1974, Richard Walker was employed to provide a liaison role between certain Federal agency contacts and the Wilderness Research Center Director. His immediate past experience with wilderness management enabled us to reduce substantially the amount of time required to establish contacts with knowledgeable individuals both in management and research. He also provided a good link with a few "commercial outfitters" and residents within the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. Because of his integral involvement, his principal activities will be covered in the chronology of major events associated with the Center.

II. CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS

April 19-21 . . . Attended the Tenth Biennial Northwest Wilderness Conference, Seattle, Washington. Met with representatives of the Sierra Club (Douglas Scott; Brock Evans, Washington, D.C.), the Wilderness Society (Stewart Brandborg and George Alderson, Washington, D.C.), and numerous

regional and local wilderness advocates. Discussions centered on the Center and possible support of its programs. Each expressed strong interest and a desire to maintain active communications. Limited correspondence and contacts have since been made.

May 13-15 . . . Travelled to Missoula, Montana to meet with the organizers of the University of Montana Wilderness Institute and U.S. Forest Service Wilderness Research Unit personnel. Assisted Dean Wambach, Robert Ream and others in the organization of their Wilderness Institute which acts as a counterpart to the Center at the University of Idaho. Principal differences in the two organizations are in the areas of emphasis, i.e., the Institute concentrates on education and information dissemination whereas the Center concentrates on research. Meetings with Bob Lucas and George Stankey of the Forest Service Wilderness Unit served to focus the scope of research that might be considered as priority for the Center. Lucas expressed a strong need for biological research within wilderness areas and that funding support may be available.

May 17 . . . Visited Moose Creek Ranger District, Selway Bitterroot Wilderness. Trip was designed to establish initial contact with District Ranger Defler and other employees working in this unique all wilderness district.

June 8 . . . Richard Walker assisted Dr. Peek with a flight to the White Cap Fire Management Area in order to conduct an elk calf census.

June 10-14 . . . Trip to southern and central Idaho. Met with Governor Andrus and his assistant, John Hough. Discussed wilderness research and possible research support. The meeting led to a request for a research

proposal to be submitted to the Pacific Northwest Development Commission. Also, visited the Sawtooth National Recreation Area where discussions were held with Mr. Gray Reynolds, Superintendent, concerning possible research activity within the NRA and the Sawtooth Wilderness Area. On the return trip to Moscow, the McCall Summer Camp facility was inspected for its potential in a continuing education program aimed at developing a wilderness ethic among teachers and youth.

June 12-16 . . . Richard Walker travelled to North Star Ranch and Hamilton, Montana to tape individuals concerning the history of the Selway Bitterroot Wilderness Area. He also discussed wild river management with Ed Bloedel, Bitterroot Supervisor's Office; Wilderness fire management with Dave Aldrich (Missoula Fire Lab.); and set up a field meeting between Forest Service and Research Center Personnel.

June 24-26 . . . Flight to Running Creek Ranch with Walker and Bob White. Backpack trip up the Selway River to Paradise Guard Station where we disucssed Wilderness fire management with Dave Aldrich (Admin.); Robert Mutch (Research); Dean Byrne, District Ranger; and Dr. James Habeck, University of Montana. The Research, Development and Application (RD&A) group expressed interest in possible fisheries and limnology research in cooperation with the Idaho Cooperative Unit. Also disucssed was research into visitor reaction and interaction relative to Wilderness fire management (Forest Service "let burn" policy). Strong need was expressed for attitudinal research and applied interpretation.

July 2 . . . Richard Walker was asked by Dr. Robert Lucas (Project Leader, Wilderness Research, USFS) to present a Wilderness Inventory Training Session to Intermountain Station personnel in August. Action was affirmative.

July 12 . . . Research proposal submitted by Dr. David Greeger, University of Arizona, concerning Alpine Lakeshore carrying capacity was sent to Robert Lucas and George Stankey for content and methodology review. Reviews were positive and the possibility for partial funding was expressed.

July 15-21 . . . Bob Marshall Wilderness Field Trip. Flew into Shafer Meadow airstrip to meet with and assist the USFS Missoula Equipment and Development Center personnel in setting up a field display of lightweight, minimum impact trail maintenance equipment utilizing the traditional packstock support system. Ray Beasley, Development and Testing Branch of MEDC expressed concern and need for the Forest Service to lead the way in proper stock management in wilderness. New or redesigned multi-purpose equipment can be used to replace traditional heavy gear.

Spent one afternoon with Jack Dollan, Wilderness Specialist for the Flathead National Forest discussing management problems. He expressed concern over the almost total negative response to the newly approved and implemented Bob Marshall Wilderness Management Plan, i.e., is the Forest Service (specifically Region I) interpretation of the Wilderness Act into management direction correct? If it is correct then how can the wilderness visitor be reached and educated prior to any planned visit to classified wilderness.*

During the 75-mile backpack trip, we (Walker and myself) met with private parties, commercial trips under special use permits, a Wilderness Society sponsored group, an American Forestry Association "Trail Riders of

* Note: This problem of communication/education/regulation relative to the wilderness visitor is an oft expressed concern of those charged with managing wilderness/primitive areas--a research proposal (Fazio & Johnson) has been submitted to address portions of this specific problem.

the Wilderness" group, Forest Service trail crews, and wilderness rangers. These encounters emphasized that the needs, desires, and expectations of a wilderness venture vary by user group as do the experience levels obtained. Research is obviously needed in this area to obtain quantitative and qualitative data which match these differences to management of the opportunities provided.

Jack Dollan expressed an interest in possibly contracting with an individual or graduate student to compile the history of the Bob Marshall Wilderness and to classify the management implications.

A field report of this trip was prepared for the files.

July 26 . . . Richard walker took a support flight to Fish Lake (Gary Koehler/ Pine Marten Study) and continued on to Taylor Ranch to check rumors of excessive sand on the runway due to flooding. Concern had been expressed by the Forest Service as to unsafe conditions for supporting fire crews operating out of Taylor Ranch. He visited with Earl Dodds, Big Creek District Ranger, to set up a subsequent meeting to organize a "show-me" trip in the Idaho Primitive Area.

July 31-August 1 . . . Trip to Taylor Ranch. Met with Earl Dodds to discuss wilderness management and possible roles that the Taylor Ranch might play in an overall management plan for the Idaho Primitive Area. Discussed management alternatives, possible cooperative research efforts, and a late summer field trip.

Walker evaluated the sand situation and later passed his observations on to Ken Sowles.

August 7-9 . . . Walker presented a training session on Permanent Point Photography as an aid to Wilderness Inventory and Analysis to personnel from the USFS and the University of Montana Wilderness Institute.

August 12-16 . . . Participated (Walker and Newby) in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area field tour for Educators. This was an informal information and education field trip with a nearly 50/50 mix of educators and researchers. Forest Service personnel from both administration and research also participated.

The spectrum of problems and management opportunities facing the agency varied from the ever-expanding Sun Valley multi-seasonal recreation complex, the controversial limiting of subdivisions to three designated communities, the complex mineral prospecting/access development, the acquisition program, to the Sawtooth Wilderness Management concerns. We visited in depth with Gray Reynolds, NRA Superintendent; Tom Kovilicky, Assistant Superintendent; and David Lee, Sawtooth Wilderness Manager. The need for both sociological and ecological carrying capacities studies on which to base management decisions was stressed.

Bill Mullens, University of Idaho, is presently preparing a Ph.D. research program dealing with inventory and carrying capacities within the Sawtooth Wilderness. He is consulting very closely with Reynolds, Kovilicky and Lee at the Sawtooth NRA.

The Sawtooth NRA provides a unique opportunity for agency sponsored wilderness research due to the legislated funding under P.L. 92-400. Although discrepancies still exist between authorized and appropriated funding, the Sawtooth Wilderness probably approaches the optimum situation relative to specific fiscal and personnel allocations. This situation alone makes this NRA a prime candidate for wilderness research under

controlled conditions.

August 23-30 . . . Walker was in the field doing dendrochronological sampling from trees and structures in the Upper Selway River area.

August 31 . . . Walker worked with Dr. M. Falter on aerial color photos of wave turbidity on the Dworshak Reservoir.

September 8 . . . Submitted research proposal to the Governor's Office and the Pacific Northwest Development Commission on "The Analysis of the Role of Wilderness Resources in the Social and Economic Welfare of Man and the Pacific Northwest Region."

September 9-12 . . . Walker at Fish Lake and the Selway Bitterroot Wilderness doing historical cabin research and dendrochronological sampling.

Newby was on a research field trip and seminar at Corn Creek on the Salmon River. Wild river and wilderness research problems were the principal topics. The meeting was attended by about 25 people representing virtually every institution, agency, and special interest group concerned about wild rivers and wilderness. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas, philosophies, problem definitions, etc. relative to the two topics. Potential inter-institutional/agency and multi-disciplinary cooperative research interests were identified for subsequent action.

September 20 . . . Patrick Vaughn of the Governor's Office called to say that the Pacific Northwest Development Commission had awarded us \$12,000 to study wilderness. Contract will be ready before the end of the year.

September 24-28 . . . Walker and Newby Participated in a Forest Service "show-me" trip through the Idaho Primitive Area. Two short airplane trips to the Taylor Ranch and Cold Meadows were taken to discuss potential opportunities and problems associated with these areas. Later we,

along with Hoyle Sorenson (Regional Office, Ogden) and Earl Dodds (Big Creek District Ranger), took a three-day pack trip in the Upper Big Creek/Chamberlain Basin areas to identify management problems and associated research needs.

Dodds stressed the need for accurate baseline data on the primitive area and its users from which correlations could be made as to use impact and degradation. He also expressed the need for studies dealing with carrying capacities and pre-visit contact methodologies.

The Forest Service's proposed special use campsite rest rotation program offers some very real and potentially important research possibilities.

Hoyle Sorenson (Regional Office, Ogden) inquired as to our availability for participation in an in-service Wilderness Workshop for Region 4, tentatively scheduled for Spring, 1975.

October 1 . . . Walker presented a lecture on the concept of "Wilderness" as defined in the Wilderness Act of 1964.

October 2-3 . . . Attended the annual meeting of the Idaho Recreation and Park Society. Presented a paper on "Recreation Education in Idaho" and was a member of a panel addressing the topic of internships for recreation students. I had many inquiries concerning our wilderness program and several people expressed the desire to do graduate work in wilderness management.

October 7-10 . . . Walker attended the Fire and Land Management Symposium jointly sponsored by the Tall Timbers Research Station and the Intermountain Fire Research Council. He participated in a panel presentation and discussion-- "Are Current Fire Management Activities Compatible with Park and Wilderness Values?"

October 20-25 . . . Attended the National Recreation and Park Association Congress in Denver, Colorado. Participated in the student information program for recreation related education. Student interest was high in any program dealing with management of wilderness values. Also, was able to discuss possible cooperative research programs with researchers from Utah State University, Colorado State University, Texas A&M University, and Southern Illinois University--probability seems to be very good for such activities.

October 26-30 . . . Participated in a National Symposium on the "Application of Recreation Research". Most of the top researchers in outdoor recreation attended which enabled me to re-establish communications with active research across the country.

October 29 . . . Walker attended the Third International Symposium on the Environment at EXPO 74. He participated in a panel discussion of "Wilderness and Wildlife".

October 30 . . . Instrumental in having Thurman Trospen, National President of the Wilderness Society, visit the College and present an impromptu open seminar on "Wilderness in Today's Society".

November 5-6 . . . Trip to the Taylor Ranch. Met Jess and Dorothy Taylor--completed two taping sessions for historical purposes and opened communications regarding his thoughts and feelings on the management and purposes of the "Taylor Ranch". He agreed to allow Wilderness Research Center personnel to have access to all the records, etc. from "Cougar" Dave Lewis and himself as related to the ranch and the Big Creek area. He was most emphatic about allowing the material to be used only

"on site" and not at some distant location. Considerable thought and policy formulation must occur before this can become a reality.

November 20-22 . . . Dick Walker and Dave Johnson went to the Taylor Ranch to complete additional taping sessions with Jess Taylor and to obtain photographs for a Wilderness Research Center brochure which is being planned as part of a program to put the Center on firm conceptual and fiscal basis.

III. ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

The first several months as Wilderness Center Director were spent attempting to develop a sound basis on which to build a viable research/education program. Considerable time was spent "sounding out" potential support from funding agencies. Much of the support has degenerated to nothing more than a "wait-and-see" proposition. Funds have dried up at virtually all levels, especially foundation support. The only bright spot has been the \$12,000 contract (in preparation) with The Pacific Northwest Development Commission.

Although there appears to be a great deal of interest concerning interdisciplinary research we are still hampered by a lack of solid fiscal support. For instance, a research proposal is being prepared to do a study of the significance of cultural resources in the Idaho Primitive Area which would involve researchers from the History and Archeology Departments.

Another study being discussed and planned would involve faculty and students from Forestry (Wildland Recreation), Landscape Architecture, Geography, and Environmental Law. This study would be directed at

developing methodologies for inventory and evaluation of environmental experience values inherent to a "wilderness" resource containing a "wild, scenic, and recreational river".

We are currently negotiating support from the Sawtooth National Recreation Area to do a study on the inventory of wilderness value components and a study on biological impacts along "high use" corridors in the Sawtooth Wilderness Area. Both of these studies are Master student projects and we are optimistic about getting the necessary support.

Two other projects currently being explored involve getting the Wilderness Research Center accepted as a viable component of the University system. First, we are working on a strictly public information brochure which will explain the objectives and purposes of the Center. This brochure will be used for general information and to send to students interested in doing graduate work (possibly undergraduate also) in wilderness management and research. The second project is designed to give the Center some fiscal stability in the form of a Wilderness Research Foundation. The concept has been explored and appears to be the best means to give long range stability and continuity to the Center. A separate brochure will be developed which describes how individuals and/or organizations can contribute to a continuing program of wilderness research. As soon as the necessary approvals are obtained, we will seek out regional representatives to help solicit donations, etc. to the Foundation. We have several good prospects for this action and foresee strong support.

One other action which appears to be almost mandatory is the redefinition of the goals and objectives of the Wilderness Research Center. Hopefully, a draft of this revision will accompany this report.