

UI student from McCall combines love of flying with wildlife conservation

University of Idaho student Scott Fereday has a goal like no other student. He wants to combine his passion for wildlife with his passion for flying.

"My father has his own plane, and I have been flying since I was young," said Fereday.

"When I came to the University of Idaho, I found out that wildlife was something I really wanted to learn about," he said. "I really want to combine helicopters with wildlife because they are both passions of mine."

Fereday is a wildlife resources student from McCall who will graduate in May. He spent last summer at Taylor Ranch Field Station, and his experiences there were life changing. "I spent all of last summer at Taylor Ranch studying under Jim and Holly Akenson, and our research made me want to become even more involved,"

he said.

"One day early in the summer, I took a telemetry flight with Jim and my dad, and I think this might have been the defining moment," Fereday said. "Before then, I knew I wanted to fly, and I knew I wanted to study wildlife, but I wasn't really sure if I wanted to pair the two."

Fereday said the courses he has taken at the University of Idaho have been helpful and enjoyable, but the field time he spent at Taylor Ranch was most influential.

"The three months I spent at Taylor Ranch provided me with an outlet where I could really apply my knowledge," he said. "It made a large impact on my professional and academic life."

Although Fereday enjoys studying elk, deer and mountain sheep, he really is interested in surveying predators. "Large carnivores like



Scott Fereday is shown checking the load on a mule named Bird during a bat research trip last summer 23 miles from his base at Taylor Ranch in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.

Photo courtesy Scott Fereday

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—Scott Fereday

wolves and bears would be much more exciting and have much more applicability with helicopter study," he said.

Fereday will attend the Silverhawk Aviation Academy in Caldwell starting next fall. "I only flew in a helicopter once and I was hooked," he said. "The freedom that a helicopter allows outside of a traditional fixed-wing aircraft is tremendous

and truly addictive."

It takes the average student at Silverhawk about 11 months to complete the course. The total program, including the highest possible certification, will cost Fereday about \$60,000.

The bottom line for Fereday is that his passions make the world a more livable and sustainable place for humans and animals.