



# Frankly Speaking

Biannual Report of the Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness / Fall 1995

## Wolves Finding Their Niche In River Of No Return Wilderness

by Louise Brannon

Remember the wolves? They've been so quiet lately that we've almost forgotten the excitement of their arrival on the Frank last winter.

The first four wolves were released at Corn Creek on the main Salmon River on January 14, 1995.

The two males and two females endured their small cages for more than 70 hours following their capture near Hinton, Alberta. Bad weather over the wilderness scrapped the original plan of flying the animals to Indian Creek Airstrip on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

When the weather finally cleared, however 11 more wolves were released at that airstrip and nearby Thomas Creek on January 20. All of the wolves wore collars equipped with radio transmitters. Some, including the first four released, have names, courtesy of Idaho school children who will keep tabs on their movements through the "Track a Wolf Program" run by the Ketchum-based Wolf Education and Research Center.

One of the wolves released at Indian Creek was shot only 10 days later on Iron Creek, about 25 miles west of Salmon. The gray female, unluckily numbered B13, was killed on private property next to a calf on which she had apparently been feeding. She was 50 miles from the release site.

According to Paul Koch of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Boise office, the remaining wolves have been "doing what they are supposed to do" by staying in and around the Frank and other roadless areas, feeding on wild game.

So where are the Frank's first wolves, and how are they doing?

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Wildlife veterinarian Dave Hunter coaxes a wolf from its cage at Corn Creek Campground on the edge of the Frank Church Wilderness. Fifteen wolves were released into the Wilderness in January.

## Wilderness Reorganization Decision Delayed For A Year

WASHINGTON, D.C., (June 30, 1995) - - The USDA Forest Service will continue its review and analysis of a proposal to reorganize the management of the Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness, according to Forest Service Chief Jack Ward Thomas. The Forest Service has been considering consolidation of the Wilderness into one administrative unit.

Thomas' decision was made June 29 to delay for one year a final decision about how to most effectively reorganize the administration of the 2.4 million acre Wilderness, located on parts of the Salmon-Challis, Payette, Nez Perce, Boise and Bitterroot National Forests in Idaho.

"Although I believe this organizational change to be a sound proposal, I do not plan to move forward this year,"

Thomas said. "Before moving forward I want to ensure the Forest Service works more with the Idaho Congressional delegation and public to be sure all concerns are addressed effectively. It is critical that any change in the administration of the Frank Church receive the delegation's and public's support."

### Focusing on the Future

SALMON, IDAHO -- "We must stop being concerned with what has happened in the past and go forward with management that operates as a unit with consistency," R-4 Regional Forester Dale Bosworth told the FC-RONR Wilderness Directors and Lead Working Group on July 28. "It is important to agree on a program of work for the Wilderness and

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# Wolves In The Wilderness

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"Chat-Caaht," a gray male, remains alone.

"Akiata," a dark gray/black female, has not been spotted by the regular tracking flights since March 8. Koch believes she has gone so far north that her radio collar signals can't be picked up.

"Kelly," a dark gray female, is now east of Missoula.

"MoonStar Shadow," a black/gray male, is on the Idaho-Montana border west of Lost Trail Pass, and has paired with a black female named "Lebrai" from the Indian Creek release.

Of the remaining wolves, a black/dark grey female has paired with "Keea," a gray male, and they are now in the Stanley Basin area.

A gray male named "Hinton" has paired with a gray female and the two are thought to be in the Chamberlain Basin area.

Another female has been staying on Lolo Pass near Missoula, where a naturalized wolf has been spotted for several years.

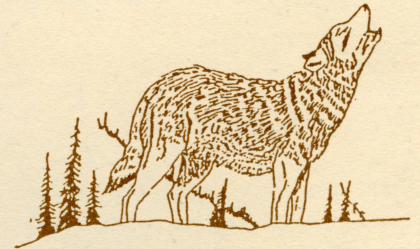
According to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the area where ten of the wolves are now ranging is home to 22,000 elk, 16,000 deer, and 1,000 big-horn sheep. On average, a wolf will kill about 16 ungulates per year. This year, the wolves now in place are expected to dine on about 160 animals. Many of these will be old, weak, or wounded during the hunting season.

With a fully-recovered wolf population in central Idaho of 10 packs and

about 100 animals, 1600 elk and deer would be killed each year by the wolves. By contract, every year poachers in Idaho kill five times that many elk and deer.

This winter, Fish and Wildlife Service plans to release another 15 wolves into the Frank. Some of the wolves will probably move to other parts of the state. However, on August 23, Ed Bangs, head of the wolf recovery program for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, announced that the agency may speed up the program by transplanting twice as many wolves as originally planned into Yellowstone and central

Idaho next winter. This would save up to "a couple hundred thousand bucks, at least," according to Bangs, at a time when the program is facing proposed budget cuts. Bangs says he will make a decision when he sees his final budget in October.



## Focusing On The Future

(continued from page 1)

folks being accountable for achieving that work." The board of directors, made up of the Forest Supervisors of the Nez Perce, Payette, and Salmon-Challis National Forests and regional directors for Recreation and Wilderness from R-1 and R-4, and the Lead Work Group (LWG), made up of the five district rangers and several staff people, met to discuss interim and future management of the Frank.

LWG chairman Rogers Thomas said that much of the current organization is working well. "We have a great deal of expertise and dedication on our work force, there is improved team work between districts and forests and our communication with the public is better than in the past." He also noted that the LWG and the Wilderness Coordinator were working well together.

"We've come a long way, but there is still room for improvement," Thomas noted. He pointed out a need for more consistency in management, a need to set Wilderness-wide priorities and a unified approach to budgeting and accountability as areas that need attention.

As a first step towards improving the budgeting process the directors told the LWG to develop a unified budgeting process for the whole Wilderness. The process would provide funding for each of the districts' base program needs. The remaining Wilderness project dollars would be pooled and used for priority projects based

on Wilderness-wide needs.

The LWG will also develop a single FC-RONR Wilderness program of work which will outline and prioritize projects on a Wilderness-wide basis. The program of work will be submitted to the directors for approval annually. The LWG will evaluate priority projects for suitable funding starting in fiscal year 1996.

To set the stage for the coordinated priority and budget approach the directors noted that money allotted for setting up the single unit in fiscal year 1995, had not been used, while the Payette NF needed money to replace the Porphyry Creek Bridge. The bridge, which crosses the South Fork of the Salmon River at Porphyry Creek is on a major trail in the Wilderness. It was destroyed in the 1994 Chicken Creek Fire. The Payette would be unable to budget a major bridge replacement for several years, so the directors approved transferring the money from the Salmon-Challis to the bridge project on the Payette.

The directors noted that several efforts are underway to make the Wilderness standards more consistent. The Implementation Guide for Special Use Permits (outfitters and guides) will be completed in October and the updated Frank Church Management Plan should be finished in April of 1996.

### Frankly Speaking . . .

This is the ninth issue of *Frankly Speaking*, a biannual report published by the USDA Forest Service, Frank Church River of No Return (FC - RONR) Wilderness Coordinator to keep Wilderness users and managers up to date on what is happening in the FC-RONRW and why.

To submit articles, to tell us what you'd like to see in *Frankly Speaking*, or for more information about the publication contact the editor, Kent Fuellenbach, at the Salmon-Challis National Forest Supervisor's Office, P.O. Box 729, Salmon, Idaho 83467 Phone (208) 756-5145.

# Outfitter Camps On Salmon River Affirmed By Regional Official

A Forest Service Region Four official has affirmed a June decision to issue permits for three private outfitter camps on the Salmon River in the Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness -- overturning three appeals.

Deputy Regional Forester Jack Blackwell affirmed Salmon and Challis Forests Supervisor George Matejko's June 6 decision to allow continued operation of three private outfitter camps along the Salmon Wild & Scenic River. The decision was based on an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the impacts of the camps at Stub Creek, Smith Gulch and Arctic Creek.

The camps operated before the area was designated Wilderness and part of the Wild & Scenic River System. Current special use permits were to expire at the end of this year. Matejko's decision granted new 15-year permits for the camps.

Wilderness Watch, The Wilderness Resource Center and the Ecology Center, and an individual, Joseph R. Higgins, appealed Matejko's decision because they believe that private camps are incompatible with a Wilderness or a Wild & Scenic River.

Blackwell said the issue of whether the Forest Service has the discretion to allow the camps to remain was outside the scope of the EIS. And, while the wild river act aims to maintain wild rivers in primitive condition, "the legislative record accompanying the Central Idaho Wilderness Act recognized the traditional and existing uses (such as jet boats and the existence of camps along the river)."

The camps serve an important segment of the public, and Matejko's decision maintains an existing use that meets the intent of the specific legislation for the area, he added.

The Forest Service did the EIS as part of a negotiated settlement in a lawsuit challenging the status of the Smith Gulch camp. Forest officials included the other Salmon River camps in the analysis because of their similarities and location on the "Wild" section of the Salmon River.



## Fire Takes Its Place In The Frank

Lightning sparked 55 fires in the Frank this summer. At the end of September, 39 of these fires were still burning as prescribed natural fires, and expected to be naturally extinguished by cooler weather and fall storms.

Most of these fires are very small; 40 are less than one acre in size. Only four have burned more than 100 acres. These are; Waterfall, which has burned 2200 acres in the Waterfall Creek drainage of the Middle Fork; Deadhorse, 530 acres; Bum Creek, 330 acres; Little Marble, 125 acres; and Brushy-Sheep, 120 acres.

Why so many prescribed natural fires this year, so soon after the disastrous wildfire season of 1994? The answer is found in the very different weather conditions of the two seasons. This year the Frank enjoyed a wet spring, relatively cool summer, and frequent rains. This has kept plants green and fuel moisture levels relatively high. These conditions are ideal for prescribed natural fires. Letting natural fires burn now can help reduce fuel loads and allow fire to play its natural role in the Wilderness.

Fires create vegetative diversity and various habitats for wildlife. They also can eliminate large areas of heavy fuel accumulation, so that the potential for an intense wildfire in a drought year is reduced.

Fire managers work through a series of questions as they decide whether or not to let a particular Wilderness fire go its own way:

- Is the fire lightning caused?
- Are resources available for a prescribe natural fire?
- Are life and property protected?
- Is the fire predicted to remain within the Wilderness boundary?
- Are smoke management conditions acceptable?
- Are existing and forecasted fire behavior acceptable?
- Is project funding available?

If the fire manager can answer "yes" to all these questions, and if there is no drought, and Wilderness values can be protected, the fire manager can recommend to the Forest Supervisor that the fire be classified as a "prescribed natural fire." A plan is then developed, describing the maximum desirable size for the fire and outlining safety and, if necessary, structure protection. A monitoring system re-evaluates the overall fire situation daily until the fire is declared out.

# Volunteers

## Andy And Carrie Care For Lantz Bar

by Linda "Rabbit" Walton

Lantz Bar was once again blessed last summer. Two wonderful people were there taking care of Frank Lantz's beloved orchard. Andy Klimek and Carrie Evans completed their second year of residence down the Salmon River at Lantz Bar. During their time they covered every inch of the bar and learned every type of plant that grows there and what medicinal and traditional uses are of each plant. They spent many hours and worked incredibly hard to keep the encroaching knapweed out of the lawn and from surrounding the buildings.

It has taken two tough summers of sweat and toil in the heat but they now have water to all the hundreds of Frank's trees. In the summer of 1995 they reclaimed the old garden, and vegetables and herbs abound.

Lantz Bar is a delightful place for the thousands of river floaters on the main Salmon River to stop and visit. They learn about the hard-working folks that used to live in the canyon and survived living off the land. There's always plenty of fruit during the season to stop and fill up on.

Taking care of such a large orchard is a full time job, and Andy and Carrie worked in the early mornings until it was too hot to move. Then Carrie created the most incredible paintings on silk scarves. She also painted every flower she discovered during the summer. Her artwork is worth noticing and admiring. When the rest of us would drop off from heat exhaustion, the two volunteers were busy using every way possible to preserve the abundance of the fruits and vegetables. They created a beautiful display of foods, sauces, and toppings.

We invited them for dinner one evening when we were on Lantz Bar, and they walked over to our camp with a five-layer Black Forest cake laced with Lantz Bar cherries. It was grander than anything you'd find in town. The two of them are truly blessed with talents and appreciation for the beauty of the river canyon and its abundant gifts.



## A Middle Fork Winner

Clifford C. Mitchell was the winner of a Middle Fork trip with the Forest Service river patrol. Cliff's name was drawn from folks who had submitted public input concerning their future management of the FC-RONR Wilderness. Cliff sent us a short diary of his trip. Here are some excerpts.

August 2, I met the boat crew at the Middle Fork District Office. My companions on this trip were Geoff Lewis, Dave Map and Cary Yacomella, all Forest Service seasonals. . . After checking in with Sherry (river level 2.66) at the launch site we helped some private parties move their rafts down the long wooden launch ramp. They in turn helped us load the sweep boat. When the raft first left the shore I felt like pinching myself to make sure I was not dreaming. It had been 11 years since I last floated the Middle Fork and it was great to be back on the river. We made our way down river and camped at Fire Island. From 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. we all took turns digging out a new pit toilet to replace the full one. The mosquitos and flies were horrendous.

August 3, We arose to the specter of an unfinished hole in the ground. So, from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. we once again shoveled dirt and rocks. Noon saw us done with a six foot deep hole for our efforts. . . . The river was great! The weather was clear, hot and beautiful. Pistol Creek Rapid was its usual scary ride even though we took it perfectly. Always did get a little freaked out by that big rock in the middle of the rapid at lower water levels.

August 4, . . . We spent an easy day enjoying the river and cleaning camps.

August 5, . . . Loon Creek is one of my favorite places, The creek is very pretty with great fishing and a fantastic hot springs. Enjoyed the fishing during the late afternoon and the hot springs under the crystal clear sky at night.

August 6, . . . Off to Sheep Camp to dig another toilet hole. Cleaned camps and toilets along the way. More fun rapids. Tappan Falls is always great. Saw a few bighorn sheep ewes and lambs. Hot windy day Arrived at camp and ate dinner. Started digging at 8:30 and stopped at 10:30. Cool, no bugs and lots of stars. Perfect toilet digging weather.

August 7, . . . It was a neat night with stars, a full moon, and spectacular moonlight highlighting the steep rocky canyon walls. Very pretty

August 8, . . . Stopped at Parrott Placer to see the sites. The raft kissed the rock wall at Upper Redside Rapid. Finished the float on the main Salmon, took out at Cache Bar.

I really enjoyed the trip. The weather was great and the river patrol crew did a great job. The country was beautiful as usual. It does my heart good to know that this is a protected Wilderness where I can travel to for future trips. And this is a place where my memories and dreams of the past exist not only in my mind, but also as a real place for future generations to visit.

# Passport In Time - A Search For The Past



The PIT Crew delicately digs into the past in one of three pits at Lantz Bar. Each artifact is carefully recorded.

by Louise Brannon

For three summers now, a Passport in Time (PIT) Project has brought archeologists and volunteers together in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. In 1993 a pack trip into the Bighorn Crags searched for high country archeological sites. In the summer of 1994 a float trip down the Salmon River documented many previously unknown sites. This year's PIT expedition focused on the history and prehistory of Lantz Bar, also on the Salmon River.

Led by Salmon and Challis National Forests archeologists Steve Matz and Merry Haydon, the five volunteers were a diverse group, including an administrator for the Seattle/King County Public Health Department, an archeologist from the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest on her third working holiday in Idaho, a teacher from Phoenix, a retiree from Sacramento, and a Seattle journalist.

The Passport in Time Program gives people with a love of history and the outdoors an opportunity to work with professional archeologists on real projects and helps the Forest Service save labor costs (over \$2.5 million in the past five years).

Although the Salmon River was swollen with spring snowmelt, the jetboat hired to carry the crew and equipment downriver from Corn Creek navigated safely, saving participants an 11-mile hike by trail. On hand to greet the group at Lantz Bar were caretakers Carrie Evans and Andy Klimek. Their love of this secluded North Fork District administraton site has brought them back for a second year of rustic living.

Named for Frank B. Lantz, who lived there from 1925 until his death in 1971, the Bar is still home to Frank's fruit trees, garden, and house. Artifacts such as bottles, nails, glass and ceramics appear regularly in the gareden, and are saved by Keri and Andy. This summer, several historic dumps were located on the Bar. Investigating them will be a whole other project, according to Steve.

The crew ran transects of the Bar with auger probes parallel to the river. Where these pulled up promising material, three pits, a meter square each, were dug down to one meter deep. One rock oven or hearth about one meter across was discovered. The digging was done in 10-centimeter increments and the earth was sifted through screens onto plastic tarps. The soil was later replaced in the same order in which it was excavated. Photos and

written documentation accompanied each step. Diagrams of each of the three units were drawn to show the layout of rocks and cobbles.

Many flakes of worked stone, bone chips, and some animal tooth enamel were found. Enough material for radiocarbon dating was recovered. Steve thinks that the site has been occupied only within the past 2000 years, since the deposits appear to be shallow and unstratified. Large amounts of meltwater from the last glaciation carved this huge river bar about 10,000 years ago. While the bar may not have been a permanent camp, people stayed here long enough to build roasting hearths or ovens for processing meat or plant foods.

Steve and Merry would like to take another PIT crew into the Frank in 1997 to further explore some promising areas near the Bighorn Crags. However, they admit that the three problems of research in the Wilderness are access, access and access. Just getting there is either very expensive or very taxing on a Ranger District's resources. Though Steve and Merry both contribute much of their own time and money to these efforts, the journeys back in time would still be impossible without the volunteers.

"They are the greatest parts; they're just wonderful," says Steve.



Sifting through the dust, volunteers search for clues to the past.

# New Lead Supervisor Notes First Impressions

George Matejko was appointed the Forest Supervisor of the Salmon and Challis National Forests in June. He has also been named the lead Forest Supervisor for the FC-RONR Wilderness.

As the new lead Supervisor for the Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness, I want to share with you my initial impressions. In August I completed a 5-day pack trip in the Frank. Maybe it was the five years in Washington, D.C. office, but what struck me first wasn't the scenery in the Frank, but the solitude.

We rode through several habitat types, which reminded me that wilderness is more than just a recreational experience. A wilderness the size of the Frank is an ecosystem laboratory where we have the chance to let natural events happen and then monitor the results.

I am impressed with the quality of the people who care about the Frank, both



George Matejko and AZ Jackson map out the trail for the day near Sweet Lake in the Selway country.

in the Forest Service and out. I realize there is debate about the degree or level of protection that is needed, but I find all of us who use the Frank share a common goal of keeping it "wild."

Some of the common issues we share

that have the potential to alter the wilderness characteristics of the Frank are noxious weeds and fire. I plan to look more closely at what options we have on these two issues and I will be asking for your help on them this winter

## The Spirit of Wilderness

by Steve Morton

"I said to myself...there comes into my mind such an indescribable, infinite, all-absorbing, divine, heavenly pleasure...I was profoundly moved...With all your science can you tell how it is, and whence it is, that light comes into the soul?" H.Thoreau, 1851

In the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness we celebrate the "spirit of wilderness." But what is it - this often stated but seldom defined quality that wilderness evokes in its close adherents? Having frequently pondered this question, which is best done while in wilderness, here is my attempt to verbalize what it means to me.

First let me say that the body of wilderness is what first draws many people to it: the physical characteristics, topography, landscapes, plants, lakes, rivers, rocks, and ice, with their accompanying sensory stimulation of sight, smell, taste, sound, and touch.

Second, the soul of wilderness is what lies in the mind and emotions of the visi-

tor It is the euphoria experienced by the contrast from daily living. It is the scientific knowledge gained from study of an unmanipulated ecosystem. It is the tranquility and peacefulness experienced during times of contemplation, and the sense of personal capability gained from applying know-how to living simply away from the east and comfort of mainstreet.

Ah, but the spirit of wilderness - the spirit that should drive the mind as the mind drives the body. What is it? It is the light to which Thoreau makes reference. It is the revelation which comes first to the intuition, then the conscience, resulting in a passion for it. It may come as one gazes into the black velvet wilderness night and humbly asks, "For how long have those brilliant jewels shown, or the rivers flowed, or the old trees stood, fallen and stood again? When and where did the fires burn?" And it comes to your intuition and conscience that the first characteristic is its timelessness.

Then there is its naturalness. When

you view a delicate flower or a giant tree in its natural community, you are viewing perfection, achieved without any help from humans. The wilderness is wiser than we are, and answers to the yet unasked questions are there for the discoverer.

The third part of the wilderness spirit is its solitude. Without times of solitude there is no spirit. It is during the moments of quiet lingering alone that wilderness will present answers to life's questions, peace to a tempest, and solutions to old problems.

Lastly, the opportunity to draw on one's own resources, to live simply in a setting where your home is contained on your back, in your canoe, or on your pack animal, creates a resourcefulness, independence, self-confidence, and respect for early citizens to whom the wilderness was always home.

For those who are entrusted with stewardship of wilderness, decisions about this resource begin to come easier when the light of the wilderness spirit shines on you and in you. This is the spirit we seek for the Frank.

# The Coordinator's Corner

Pour the ingredients into the blender . . . plug it in . . . push the puree button and stand back! That pretty well describes activities surrounding the FC-RONR Wilderness since the last Frankly Speaking. The FC-RONR Wilderness continues to be a busy and exciting place: wolves have been released, the Limits of Acceptable Change process is moving rapidly, a mid-summer announcement by the Chief of the Forest Service puts the "FC-RONR Single Administrative Unit" on hold, and several key changes in personnel working on the Wilderness have taken place. This issue of Frankly Speaking is chock full of these and other stories.

George Matejko took over as Supervisor of the combined Salmon and Challis National Forests in June. He managed to squeeze a five day pack trip in the Frank into his busy first summer back in Idaho after a stint in the Washington office. George follows Chuck Wildes, former Supervisor of the Challis as the lead forest supervisor for the FC-RONR Wilderness. Chuck has moved on to be Supervisor of the Lolo National Forest in Montana.

In another change to the FC-RONR Wilderness Board of Directors Mike King, supervisor of the Nez Perce National Forest is trading jobs with Coy Jemmett supervisor of the Prescott National Forest in Arizona. Mike has been a FC-RONR director for five years. We'll miss both Chuck and Mike on the Frank.

The Frank also lost some dedicated field folks this year. Tony Botello, North Fork District, has moved on to the High Lakes Wilderness on the Rogue River National Forest in Oregon. Patti Schwind, Krassel District, has headed for the Bob Marshall Wilderness in Montana. Patti Stieger, also of the Krassel District, is now working as the dispersed recreation co-ordinator for the Payette National Forest. Jeff Halligan, Krassel District packer, has accepted a new position. He's still with the Payette National Forest but is no longer working in the Wilderness.

One of the most time consuming issues in the Wilderness coordination blender has been the ongoing litigation on outfitter camps. This summer Wilderness Watch asked U.S. District Judge Thomas Hogan to find the Forest Service in contempt because they felt we were not following the Wilderness Acts properly in administering outfitter permits. The judge denied the request and set a conference for October 25 for a final review of the outfitter camp situation. While I can't discuss the ongoing litigation I can shed some light on what the Forest Service is doing to administer outfitter permits in the Wilderness and clear up the so-called cache issue.

The Frank Church - River of No Return (FC-RONR) is a huge Wilderness, 2.4 million acres. The Wilderness contains over 175 miles of Wild & Scenic Rivers, over 2,600 miles of trails, and elevations ranging from 10,442 feet down to 1970 feet. Special equipment and expertise are needed to enter and use much of this vast, rugged and remote region. Not everyone who wants to use the Wilderness has the equipment or the expertise. That is where outfitters and guides fit in. Whether providing white water thrills, hunting opportunities or family outings outfitters and guides provide a needed service in the FC - RONR Wilderness.

So what does the Forest Service do to ensure that outfitter and guide permits are administered in a manner compatible with wilderness values? The Forest Service outfitter and guide special use permit is designed to allow the outfitter to provide a needed service while safeguarding the wilderness resource. Careful consideration is given to resource conditions and social concerns in plan-

ning and locating camps assigned to outfitters.

The Forest Service has identified more than 1300 camp sites in the FC-RONR Wilderness, 80 of which are assigned for use by outfitters. The Forest Service has an operating plan for each of the 24 land based outfitters using the wilderness. These plans indicate the location and terms of occupancy for each camp assigned to the outfitter. The camps are available to the public outside the assigned times.

The operating plans stipulate the number of people who can occupy the camp, location of pit toilets, livestock handling facilities, temporary structures, and water sources. The camps must be kept free of litter. All garbage must be burned or packed out. Forest Rangers work with the outfitters to choose camp locations away from main trails and 200 feet from streams or lakes, wherever possible. When occupied the camps are posted with a sign indicating the outfitter, terms of occupancy, and approximate size and location of the camp. Similar information is posted at trail heads leading to the site.

When the outfitters leave the camps at the end of the season they must dismantle the camp and pack out all the equipment. No equipment caches are allowed to remain in the Wilderness. The outfitter may leave some native materials, such as tent poles, stored unobtrusively at the camp. In some cases the outfitter may be allowed to leave corral or hitch rack posts in the ground. However, all horizontal corral, hitch rack, and meat poles must be taken down. At some steep sites the outfitter is allowed to leave tent base logs in place if they are needed to prevent soil erosion. All of these conditions are spelled out in the individual operating plans. Other than these approved native material structures everything used in the camp must be packed out. When the outfitter leaves the site it should be in as natural a condition as possible.

We've come a long way in cleaning up the FC-RONR Wilderness since it was established in 1980. Back then many outfitters used permanent structures and left large caches of equipment behind at the end of each season. Now, after ten years, two lawsuits and lots of effort from the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association, the Forest Service and Wilderness Watch, the camps have been cleaned up and the caches have been removed. The only items left at the camps are those identified in the outfitter operating plans as the minimum necessary to protect the Wilderness resource.

In the 15 years since the Frank became a Wilderness the Forest Service has worked with the outfitters and guides, conservation organizations and other volunteers to clean up and haul tons of junk from the Wilderness. Not just junk from outfitter camps. The stuff included material from public camps, outfitter camps, old mining equipment, material from administrative sites, and miscellaneous trash from earlier "out of sight, out of mind" times. Because of these volunteer efforts and the work of dedicated Forest Service field folks the Wilderness is in much better shape than it was in 1980.

Despite continued challenges of our interpretation of the laws and regulations and challenges of our resource management decision, we will continue to work with all Wilderness users as stewards of this priceless Wilderness.

Ken Wotring, Wilderness Coordinator



Members of the inter-disciplinary team discuss Wilderness issues and the planning process at Hospital Bar camp, on the Middle Fork.

# Aldo Leopold Institute Surveys Wilderness Users

To help gather information on recreationists' experiences, perceptions, expectations and expenditures, the Forest Service, through the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, initiated several visitor surveys in the Frank this summer. The surveys will run through late November and survey dates and locations were randomly selected to reduce the amount of time needed to conduct the surveys.

If a Forest Service employee or volunteer approaches you at a trailhead, airstrip, boat launch or takeout site, we encourage you to take the time, about ten minutes, to provide us with your input. Already, we have had over 200 responses on the Middle Fork survey, more than 250 on the Salmon River survey and nearly 100 on the trailhead/airstrip survey.

The information you provide to us will help in formulating alternatives for our current Wilderness planning efforts. Thanks for helping us manage your Wilderness.

## IDT Trip A Gashing Success

by Kurt Becker,  
Interdisciplinary Team Leader

To understand and see first hand the resources and the issues to be addressed in the upcoming analysis for the current wilderness planning efforts, the interdisciplinary team took a float trip in late July on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. The trip was full of adventure, complete with a large gash in one of the rafts from one of the river's "canine" rocks the first day on the river. The punctured raft was repaired with 54 stitches of high strength twine and long strips of rubber patches that held fast for the rest of the trip. The incident provided a reminder that nature is in charge and that trips into the wilderness are not without risk.

The team observed and discussed archeological and historical sites, the ongoing visitors survey, administrative facilities, landing strips, campsites, trails, outhouses, noxious weeds, overflights, wildlife and fisheries, private inholdings and hot springs. The outing was a working trip and the team conducted two formal meetings during the week and a close-out session the last night on the river. They discussed the issues and possible management strategies for dealing with them.

A tour of the Flying B Ranch was a special treat during the trip. Dan Baird,

one of the ranch directors and a previous member of the Citizens Work Group, joined us at the private inholding. Dan and Ranch Manager Bill Guth showed us how their operation is in concert with the spirit of the Wilderness Act and articulated special concerns that private property owners have.

Everyone on the IDT field trip enjoyed the experience on the river and came away with a greater understanding of the resources and users of this magnificent resource.

### Need More Information?

For general and Wilderness-wide information contact:

**Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness Information**  
Salmon-Challis National Forests, P.O. Box 729 Salmon, Idaho 83467 (208) 756-5100

For site specific information and conditions contact:

#### Salmon-Challis National Forests

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North Fork, Idaho 83466  
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**Middle Fork District**  
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#### Payette National Forest

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#### Nez Perce National Forest

**Red River District**  
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Elk City, Idaho 83525  
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**Salmon River District**  
HC 01 Box 70  
Whitebird, Idaho 83554-9706  
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# Planning Update

Planning for the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness continues at a brisk pace. The second round of public involvement was completed in April and May. It began with a series of six public meetings and letters sent to everyone who receives this newsletter. This public involvement round solicited comments on proposed indicators and standards. The interdisciplinary team considered the comments and has recommended the following indicators to be considered further in the analysis.

## ACCESS INDICATORS

- \* Distance of trails that are causing resource problems
- \* Actual use compared to potential permitted use on the Middle Fork and main Salmon Rivers
- \* Resource impacts on the Middle Fork and main Salmon Rivers
- \* Number of permitted launches on the main Salmon River that take out above Long Tom Bar.
- \* Number of aircraft operations per day at Forest Service maintained airstrips

## ECOLOGICAL INDICATORS

- \* Extent and species of noxious weeds
- \* Human-induced impacts to riparian bank stability
- \* Recreational and domestic stock grazing impacts
- \* Human-induced impacts to special botanical areas
- \* Significant human disturbance to special wildlife areas
- \* Ratio of lakes that are stocked with fish to those that are not
- \* Change in indigenous aquatic species composition

## SOCIAL INDICATORS

- \* Number of campsites in each Frizzel condition class (1-5)
- \* Cost of managing the Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness
- \* Jobs and income in local communities
- \* Jobs and income associated with outfitter and guide services

These draft indicators are the basis of the field inventories that were performed last summer. The specialists gathered information on the prospective indicators to assist in preparing the environmental consequences portion of the environmental impact statement and to help derive the appropriate standards for the final indicators selected. The draft indicators will be reviewed by appropriate Rangers, Forest Supervisors, and Regional personnel before they are finalized.

This fall the interdisciplinary team began formulating alternatives. The array of alternatives is primarily focused on setting standards for the indicators selected. Though there will be some indicators that apply across the entire Frank Church, there will probably be different standards for some indicators depending on the management area zone. Management areas are contiguous locations with common management goals and common management objectives. Management zones are further subdivisions of management areas.

Speaking of management area zones, the majority of public comments on our draft management area zones during the scoping process was very positive. We have elected to retain the original delineations with some wording changes that better describe the lands and eliminate confusion.

The wilderness will be divided (figuratively speaking) into two management areas: rivers and land. The River Management Area will have three management zones: the main Salmon River Wild & Scenic River Corridor, the Middle Fork Salmon River Wild and Scenic River Corridor and Unique Tributaries (of both these rivers).

The Land Management Area will have three management zones, too: Special Management Zones, Mining Management Zone (created with the Central Idaho Wilderness Act), and the General Management Zone.

A draft desired future condition statement or DFC was also endorsed by the majority of respondents during the scoping process. This document outlines what you want the Wilderness to look like in the future and not just in our lifetimes. It covers the entire Frank and certain special areas of this Wilderness.

So what are the plans for completing the current planning process for the Frank? The Forest Service will put all of the pieces of the puzzle (desired future condition, issues, indicators and standards) together in a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) to be available in mid-December. The DEIS will display the alternatives that address the key issues. The indicators, standards and possible management actions may vary between alternatives or across management zones.

Once the DEIS is released we will host a series of open houses to explain how we arrived at the alternatives. We will then take substantive comments into consideration when preparing the final environmental impact statement (FEIS). The FEIS should be completed in April 1996.



ID team members pulled and bagged noxious Rush skeleton weed at Cameron Creek.

*Kurt Becker, Interdisciplinary Team Leader*

# Districts' Update

## North Fork

Two major reconstruction projects are underway on the North Fork District. The popular launch ramp at Corn Creek was lengthened and widened to make more room for the site which serves both floaters and jet boaters. At Cache Bar, the take out point for Middle Fork trips, the ramp is being enlarged, and new facilities including, a well, toilets and changing rooms are being built. Work on the projects stopped during the heavy use season and will be completed this fall. New rest rooms were also constructed at Bear Creek and Halfway Gulch along the Salmon River Road.

The new Scat machine at Newland Ranch started operation this spring. The machine dumps and disposes of human waste from river runner portable toilets. The Scat machine is the primary depository for waste of floaters using the Middle Fork. An RV dump station and garbage disposal are also available at the site.

The district worked with David Cole and Alan Watson of the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute on a project to research benchmark sites for assessing camp conditions along the Salmon River. The proposed benchmark sites will help the Forest Service monitor resource conditions and determine how river and land based uses mesh along the river.

In a cooperative effort the trail crews of the North Fork and Cobalt Districts worked together on trail maintenance projects on the lower Middle Fork, the main Salmon River and in the Stoddard country. The cooperative effort allowed the crews to accomplish more work than they would have been able to do separately.

The reconstruction of the Cayuse Trail began late in the season. The contract was awarded in September after an appeal of the decision was resolved during an on-the-ground meeting with the appellant.

## Salmon River

The Salmon River Ranger District's river ranger, Linda Hagedorn, went out in May on a training trip with Cascade Adventures, one of the main Salmon float boating outfitters. Weeds were a major topic of discussion. The group learned to identify new spotted knapweed growth (rosettes) early in the trip, but found the tender rosettes difficult to pull. However, at California Creek the plants were sturdy and beginning to bud. These plants were easy to pull and in only 15 minutes the group had culled 1/4 acre of knapweed.

The interest and effort applied to weeds by the Cascade Adventures crew indicates that commercial parties can be very effective in helping fight the weed war. An idea suggested, but not yet formally implemented, is an adopt-a-campsite program for outfitters. Any outfitter or guide with thoughts on how to organize such a program should contact Bruce Anderson at Salmon River Ranger District.

The high water of the 1995 float season was a mixed blessing. It meant less time floating and more time pulling weeds for the river patrol. It also carried weed seeds farther down the river. All hands are needed in pulling weeds in the weed war. You don't have to be part of an organized effort to help. Just learn to identify the target weeds and grub in!

Two Challenge Cost Share volunteer weed pulling and work float trips took place with private boaters in July. The Forest Service worked with the Idaho Whitewater Association and Boise's Mountain Cove School on the projects.

The Salmon River District and the North Fork District cooperated with Idaho Public Television on a documentary about Idaho's Wild & Scenic Rivers. The program will examine the history of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, its connection to Idaho, and profile the Idaho rivers which are part of the system. The story will highlight the features that make the rivers unique- the scenery, culture, history, resources and people.

## Krassel

June brought a healthy share of moisture to the FC-RONR Wilderness. Snow remained on the high ridges, and the creeks and streams ran high. Snags from last year's fires toppled. Nature presented the field crews with its own set of wonder and challenges.

The Forest Service pokes and pulls at its organizational structure, examining how and what we do and seeing what changes can be made in who does what. The Forest Service creates another set of challenges and wonder with its rearranging structure.

We have a strong work force ready to meet the challenges, to open and improve the trails and to care for that special resource of WILDERNESS. Some of our special trail projects were on the South Fork of Chamberlain (Northwest Youth Corps), the ridge trail south of Coyote Springs (Youth Conservation Association Crew), and the Silver Creek Trail (Forest Service crew). Throughout the season we pit our crosscuts and axes against the falling snags from last year's fires and had a lot of muscle provided by eight Student Conservation Association Assistants.

Some of our personnel shifted about and made some moves to new locations, both on the District and off. It looks like we may end up being a bit short-handed this season, but will do our best to meet the needs of visitors to the Payette portion of the Wilderness.

As a reminder, the South Fork of the Salmon River Trail will remain closed as a result of the fire last year that burned out the Porphyry Creek Pack Bridge. An alternative route is the Smith Saddle Trail. We will not attempt to reopen the Porphyry Trail between the South Fork and Chicken Peak for at least two years, as vegetation is allowed to return and the reconstruction schedule for the Porphyry Pack Bridge is determined.

# Districts' Update

## Cobalt

The 1995 field season began with a reconstruction project on the Middle Fork near Rattlesnake grade. Both North Fork and Cobalt Districts participated in the trail project including Jim Upchurch, Bill Hickey, Steve Penner, Jarred Hatch and Quinn Aldous.

Bill Hickey and the trail crew began their regular field operations at Bernard Guard Station and then worked on trails in Camas Creek, Middle Fork, Waterfall Creek, and the Bighorn Crags. They finished up in the Clear Creek drainage.

Wilderness Ranger Jeff Weise had a full schedule of work this field season. Jeff concentrated his efforts in the Bighorn Crags making wilderness contacts with users, spreading the word of "low impact horse camping," maintaining signs, and packing out garbage. Jeff continued doing campsite inventories, vegetation studies and other resource inventories related to the "Limits of Acceptable Change" process, and other inventory needs for the District. The Crags Campground again had two volunteer hosts providing information and educational materials for wilderness users.

The District continued with efforts in visiting assigned outfitter camps to check on progress with the "remedial plan." Visits to several camps that were unavailable last fall were made this July and August.

Range Conservationist Robb Mickelsen continued to monitor the Middle Fork Grazing Allotment to collect riparian, fisheries and wildlife data necessary to revise the allotment management plan.

The District used a variety of help in maintaining trails this season. The Lemhi County Youth Group worked a portion of the lower Yellowjacket Trail. John Sutfin worked on several wilderness trails in a contract for approximately 100 miles of wilderness trails. These folks and Bill Hickey and crew gave the District a big boost in trail maintenance in 1995.

## Middle Fork

We've had a busy, short-handed year on the Middle Fork District, but we've gotten a lot of work done. It's hard to represent everything we've done in a short article.

The 1995 field season was for the most part business as usual. All the district programs were up and running. The business management program, led by Judy Smith and supported by Donna Leuzinger and Marie Sullivan, carried the district through another year of river applications and permits, seasonal employee hiring and layoffs, time and accounting and the never ending grind of keeping track of the budget. Marie Sullivan retired this season after three years with the district and we wish her well. Margaret Hutchings took Marie's place. She was the river program's shuttle driver for seven years before moving to the office. The business folks are now working on the 1996 river applications and permits, not to mention the 96 budget.

The fire crews had a relatively slow year with respect to fires. However, they accomplished a great deal of project work in the Loon Creek area, including work on the Loon Creek Guard Station compound and area roads and trails after last year's Pioneer fire. The district had 29 fires, fifteen of which were prescribed natural fires.

The Wilderness trails program, led by Laurie Matthews, had a busy year with outfitter and guides administration, trail maintenance and a host of ongoing Wilderness project work. The outfitters and guides administration was complicated by the ongoing litigation and a few permit transfers.

The season began for the trail crew in April and was going strong till the end of September, when the early layoffs brought the program to a halt. The weather last winter and this spring brought a lot of trees and such down onto the trail system. The trail crew had its work cut out for them this year opening and keeping open the district's trail system. They managed to clear about

375 miles of trails, remove the Boomerang Creek Bridge from the Pistol Creek Trail and complete some needed blasting work.

The Wilderness rangers, in addition to helping with some light trail work, continued to inventory trail conditions, noxious weed locations and camp conditions. They posted signs and documented needs for other signs. The rangers also cleaned many of the district's dispersed recreation sites and campgrounds associated with Wilderness access roads.

## River Program

Wow! This year's highwater left most of us giddy with excitement and some of us just giddy. Along with the typical rafts flipping a relatively new occurrence plagued some of our commercial outfitters, sweep boats flipping. Yes the big ones can be flipped. Thankfully these caused no injuries, although it did bring a healthy new respect for the river.

Even with the high water and cool spring, use was up to an all time high of 10,375.

We hauled out a lot of river booty and one lucky person found \$200 hung up in the willows - sorry there was no ID recovered.

The contractors are finishing a new outhouse at Boundary Creek as this is being written.



Rick Piva and Eric Lonn dig a latrine at Indian Creek camp.

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Frankly Speaking  
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*Senator Frank Church*

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## Districts' Update

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### Red River

The Red River trails program is off and running strong this year with a good share of last year's crew back again. We have 14 people working under the able direction of Nick Hazelbaker and Gary Loomis. Five of these are volunteers from the Student Conservation Association. Armondo Leon and Dean Mendenhall are leading the crews. They got an early start working the Bargamin Creek Trail from the Salmon River. About 185 miles will be cleared by both our crews and trail contractors. Extensive reworking will be done on an additional 23 miles, including portions of the Cache Trail #501, Swet Creek Trail #205, Bargamin Creek Trail #502, Langdon Point Trail #074, Storm Creek Trail #030, and Storm Ridge Trail #067. We have a highly skilled cadre of hand drillers for those times we have to blast solid rock to reestablish a short section of trail.

Ian Barlow has once again extended the limits of our education program. He is presenting "Stock Use," "Traditional Tool Skills," "Prescribed Natural Fire," "Nature Discovery," and "Leave No Trace" classes to a wide variety of audi-

ences. Among the fortunate ones to join in his "hands-on" experiences are school children, smokejumpers, fire fighters, frontliners, researchers, members of the Nez Perce Tribe and teenage volunteers. Ian reaches out and encourages people to see things from new perspectives. He has conscripted tons of help from Warren Miller, Laurie Do-man, Shawn Wilson and Jill Lamb.

We have volunteer youth from the Casey Family programs doing a lot of front and backcountry work. Among their chores in the Wilderness are: trail-head improvements, reworking the trail to Crofoot Ranch, and resuming the Sisyphian task of rolling up the old #9 phone line.

Ongoing Wilderness Ranger work this summer involved outfitter camp inspections, backcountry patrol, mapping noxious weeds, and trail contract inspection. One of the more interesting activities for Charles Mabbott is reworking the trail to the Salmon Mountain Lookout Spring for our highly appreciated volunteer lookouts.

As Mark Twain once observed, "The often repeated accounts of my early demise have been greatly exaggerated." So it is with Elkhorn Lookout. Harvey

Baumgartner, our packer, lead the way in the final packout of debris from the site in August. Last year's fire season caused us to reschedule this event from last year to this season.

Mary Verbeke and Mary Jo Sexton are back in business as our Hells Half Acre and Sheep Hill Lookouts. We are pleased to announce that Ken Stump recently of the Slate Creek Ranger District on the Nez Perce Forest is our new Fire Management Officer.

In the world of fisheries management, two projects were conducted this summer. One was to monitor water temperatures in Sabe Creek, Bargamin Creek and the main Salmon River. The other was water and species sampling in the high mountain lakes within the FC-RONR.

We looked forward to and have enjoyed a productive, safe, educational and wild summer.

