



Small Loggers Join SPBA Lawsuit

CITING the need to preserve judicial

Historic Alliance Opposes Land Board

review of Idaho Land Board decisions, an association of independent loggers is filing in support of the Selkirk-Priest Basin Association's unprecedented lawsuit charging the Land Board with mismanagement of the state's school endowment lands.

The Small Loggers Council (SLC) of St. Maries announced it has petitioned the state's Supreme Court to file a legal brief in support of the SPBA's ground-breaking lawsuit against the Land Board. Idaho's powerful corporate timber lobby is helping defend the Land Board.

"In the instance of the SPBA's lawsuit, we of the Council find that SPBA and our people have more in common than we do with some of the large timber interests," said SLC spokesman Andy Joliff.

tion of the people and beyond judicial review," he said.

Bill Egolf, SPBA's Forestry Committee chairman, called the alliance "really historic."

"To the best of our knowledge this is the first time Idaho citizens' groups have joined forces to confront and reverse the corporate timber juggernaut devastating Idaho's rural communities," he said. "Industrial forestry interests are ruining these communities' economies and cultures, not to mention the watersheds, wildlife and health of the forests on which they rely.

"We think this development says to the big timber interests and their political accomplices in Boise that working Idahoans are fed up," Egolf added. "We won't tolerate the waste and

"We feel that no entity, government or otherwise, should be above examina-

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SPBA Is Denied Standing Again in Land Board Suit; New Appeal Launched

IDAHO'S 4th District Judge Robert G. Newhouse ruled on Jan. 19 that SPBA lacked standing to challenge the constitutionality of two statutes passed by the Idaho Legislature in retaliation for SPBA's state lands lawsuit.

Judge Newhouse's decision was the second time SPBA has been denied standing and his decision follows First District Court Judge's Craig Kosonen's opinion denying the group's standing to challenge the state's trust land management.

Although disappointed by the decision, SPBA's attorneys waxed hopeful as the association's Board, at its regularly scheduled February meeting, approved an appeal of Judge Newhouse's decision. The possibility of consolidating the appeal of the decisions to the Supreme Court was discussed.

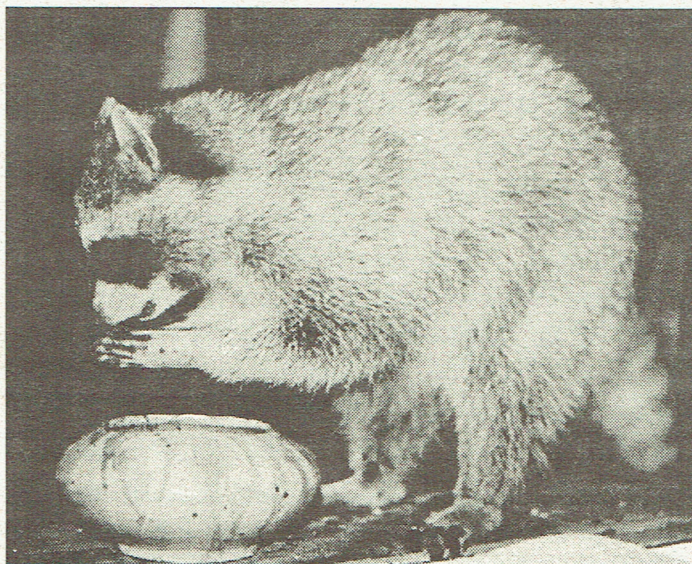
"As with Judge Kosonen's opinion, there is not a lot of reasoning in Judge

Newhouse's ruling" said Director Dave Boswell. "And what little there is seemed to have missed the mark by a pretty wide margin."

Boswell said Judge Newhouse ruled in his opinion that a Land Board-timber industry statute requiring Idaho citizens to post an estimated \$100,000 bond if they want to challenge a state timber sale was moot because the court had denied a stay — which is an injunction to stop all activities.

Boswell was clearly bewildered by the apparent lack of reasoning for this ruling.

"We don't have standing to challenge



CABIN ROBBER: A friendly raccoon dropped by the Beaver Creek home of SPBA member R. R. Schreiber recently for a peanut snack.

the statute requiring the bond because the court didn't stay the sale. The statute says you have to post a bond to be granted a stay.

"The judge said you don't post the bond if you don't get the stay, and without the stay, our claim is moot. We say we have standing regardless of which comes first, and the court is arguing in a

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Working Toward Common Goals

WE welcome the Small Loggers Council's support of our suit against the State of Idaho and the state's big timber corporation patrons. At issue is the passage of two new laws which deny all citizens of the state — although aimed specifically at the SPBA — the right to petition the courts for a redress of grievances over state Land Board timber decisions.

These laws clearly shred our First Amendment rights of speech and redress of grievances that are held so dearly by all Americans. Further, these laws insulate the timber decisions of the Land Board from public review, creating a government agency that only answers to itself and is beyond the scrutiny of the intended beneficiaries of the land: Idaho's school children. These are dangerous statutes and a grave insult to democratic procedures.

Thus the concern of the Small Loggers Council over the Land Board's conduct of timber decisions on state endowment lands is understandable. They, too, wish an accountability of government as guaranteed by the Bill of Rights.

However, not all affected parties have the stomach to take on these laws as crafted by the corporate interests at the Idaho Forest Industries Association and slipped into an administration reform package passed by the Legislature. The best case in point is the Idaho Education Association, the professional union of teachers and erstwhile custodians of our schoolchildren, which this winter announced its support for our lawsuit. The IEA hastily withdrew its



support of our suit when Joe Hinson of the IFIA — in an exercise of raw power — threatened to reduce their pay through his influence at the Legislature. Good grief! Any question about who really runs the state?

Sadly, the IEA waffled, threw their advocacy of basic rights to the wind, grabbed their paychecks, and sneaked back to their classrooms to lecture their charges on the Bill of Rights ... as amended by the state of Idaho.

The episode with the IEA demonstrates how difficult the entrenched powers can be to oppose. It has certainly taken the Small Loggers Council a great deal of courage to seek to support our lawsuit against the state. Long-term, sustainable management of our forests is in everyone's best interest — including the independent loggers who depend on healthy forests for their livelihood.

Included with this issue of *Sightlines*, you will find a letter from the Small Loggers Council seeking members and support. We felt our members might want the opportunity to help the SLC, just as the SLC's support of our lawsuit has helped in opening the eyes of many people as to the true plight of our state forests. By working together, we can achieve our common goals.

Gordon West

Gordon West
Chairman

Other Voices: Another View on the Idaho Land Board

YOU have to hand it to the Idaho Land Board for making clear how the game is to be played.

"Tuesday, Feb. 8, the board reversed its earlier action and voted to award a lease for state land to someone who had refused to bid on it; whose use of the land will provide less money to the state's public school endowment than the person who did bid; and who plans to let cattle into a stream where salmon are

supposed to spawn while the person who won the auction planned to fence livestock out.

"All this from a board that had previously made a practice of citing its constitutional duty to manage state lands for the long-term benefit of Idaho's public schools.... With this vote, the Land Board has ruptured any pretense that it is motivated by what's best for schoolkids.... They pointed to doubles-

peak that keeping cows out of the creek would do more damage than letting them in, and gave the lease to the people who were non bidders first and low bidders second.... But the Land Board set a precedent anyway. It signaled that from Tuesday on, schoolkids take a back seat to politics in management of the state lands. That's a game ranchers are not alone in knowing how to play."

— *Lewiston Morning Tribune, Feb. 11, 1994*

Basin Must Redirect Future to Provide for Young Work Force

This new buzzword in the Forest Service is "ecosystem management," which replaces their previous unstated priority of making timber sales whatever the cost. What ecosystem management will work out to be in actual practice is not yet completely clear, but redirection of the Forest Service inevitably means redirection in the economy of small rural logging towns such as Priest River, and the entire Basin.

Such changes have already begun to take place. For example, the establishment of an industrial park, the downtown transformation of a derelict bar into the new River Pigs Inn, the opening and then enlargement of Mercer's Memories, street tree planting, and other innovations have all come about in recent years. The historic Keyser House has just been moved to its new location by the railroad tracks; its setting will be a small park, and the building is to be restored as a museum reflecting the logging history of the Basin. Yet to come is the establishment of the tourist train running between Sandpoint and Newport, but it is anticipated that such a train will stop in Priest River and bring visitors into the town center. Up at Nordman, the Entree Gallery already has a reputation for excellence in Spokane, and will benefit from further exposure.

Developments of this sort also imply redirection in how the young people growing up in the Basin view their own futures — either in continuing to live and work here or in finding it necessary to leave the area.

Zeecha Berry was the first Priest River high school student to be awarded an SPBA scholarship, in 1991. Now a junior at the University of Idaho in Moscow, she is a chemical engineering major. In a recent interview she had some thoughtful com-



ZEECHA BERRY

ments to make about her earlier days here. "It was a good place to grow up," she says, and she liked living in the country. One difficulty was that because of the distances students travel to school, it was sometimes hard to keep connected with her friends.

The transition from high school to college level was a stretch. Like so many students, she felt herself unprepared: "I didn't know how to study," she told SPBA Director Gordon West. "Academically it was incredibly hard." Another big change was from the smaller social environment of the Basin to the diversity and broader culture of the university.

The main lack she sees in the preparation of high school students for the future has to do with helping them even to think about the future. "Kids are not really motivated to inquire on their own about what they might do when they graduate. There wasn't enough encouragement, or access to information about possible vocations and careers. The best approach would be to have students talk in person to people involved in work they're interested in," Zeecha observed.

"You have huge dreams in high school. Those might change once you get out of school and into the real world, but it's necessary to have big dreams, and to take the steps to start to realize them, even if you do change along the way."

What would she wish, if she could make a change to benefit Priest River students? More involvement between the community and young people, in other areas beyond sports. Kids are often looked upon as a problem, she feels. It shouldn't be that way.

And as for her own future in the Priest River area? She'd like to live here, Zeecha told us, if she didn't have to work.

Perhaps redirection in the Basin will begin to provide opportunities for young people entering the work force — young people like Zeecha.

The Resources Outlook

**The SPBA
Scholarship
Fund needs
your help!
Please see
the special
insert in this
issue of
Sightlines**

SPBA Appeals

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circle to our disadvantage.

"However, at least Judge Newhouse had the decency to rule quickly in our case instead of waiting nine months as Judge Kosonen did. We're grateful for that."

In other parts of the decision, Judge Newhouse declared that under different circumstances the issue might be ripe for the Court's review but not in this case and

in a lengthy, but unnecessary, analysis of trust law, the judge concluded what everybody already knows, that these are trust lands subject to trust law principles.

Finally, Judge Newhouse decided that a recent Idaho Supreme Court case in which the parents of Idaho school children were afforded standing to sue the Superintendent of Public Instruction (a member of the Land Board) over the state school funding system, didn't mean what it said, in effect.

In that case, the state Supreme Court

said parents who do not have children in Idaho schools, lack standing and dismissed those parents from the suit. Those parents with children in school, however, were afforded standing by the Supreme Court.

SPBA has based its claims on identical grounds, but surprisingly Newhouse said the Supreme Court's opinion was "dicta" — or, a gratuitous remark not part of the ruling.

Judge Newhouse's decision is being appealed by the association.

A Trust for Land

AT last, there is another group in our midst that wants to share with private landowners their expertise in pursuing environmental excellence in the Priest Basin. This group is the Inland Northwest Land Trust (INLT).

Land trusts are private, non-profit organizations that work with private landowners to protect significant ecosystems, such as wetlands, scenic and recreational lands, agricultural and forest lands. A land trust's innovative techniques can produce quick results and are often an attractive alternative to action by governmental agencies. A transaction with a land trust may have substantial tax benefits for the contributor.

There are more than 800 land trusts operating throughout the United States. INLT is the first to offer local land conservation services in six eastern Washington counties and in Kootenai and Bonner counties in northern Idaho. INLT is dedicated to help maintain the quality of life we all enjoy in the Basin. Their mission is to preserve and protect land in a natural state for human and ecological benefits.

INLT has five main objectives:

1. To bring a local focus to the protection of land;
2. To inform landowners of the importance of protecting land and the methods to accomplish this;
3. To develop land conservation strategy for identifying and acquiring important lands for protection;
4. To coordinate with the efforts of local, state and national government and non-government organizations in protecting land;
5. To develop a stewardship plan for managing trust lands.

Collectively, INLT acreage is surprisingly large. INLT newsletters describe a board with excellent credentials.

One column entitled "Land Conservation Primer," has been focusing on conservation easements — an example of which is a farm in Stevens County that donated a 210-acre conservation easement to the INLT. Under the terms of the easement, the property will not be further developed. It is limited to a single-family dwelling and related farm structures. The property can continue to be used for agriculture and periodic small timber harvest consistent with protecting wildlife.

Why the SPBA interest in conservation easements? Because the INLT does not own the land under a conservation easement. It does assume the long-term responsibility to see that the restrictions placed on a property are observed. INLT believes conservation easements are long-term investments with substantial responsibilities. Therefore, the INLT has established a Stewardship Endowment Fund. This fund is used solely to monitor easements and, if necessary, for legal expenses to enforce terms of the easement.

For the property owner, conservation easements can offer substantial financial gains. The easements may be donated or sold like any other interest in land. Conservation easements that are donated in perpetuity and that meet IRS criteria qualify the donor for a federal income tax deduction. The value of a donated conservation easement is generally the difference between fair market value of the property before the grant of the easement and the value afterwards. The easement may also reduce the landowner's property taxes and estate taxes.

Gordon West New SPBA Chairman

THE Board of Directors in April elected Gordon West chairman of the Selkirk-Priest Basin Association, succeeding Bruce Brockway.

West, 39, has been an SPBA director since 1990. Brockway, who has been chairman for three years and took over that position from founding chairman Barry Rosenberg, remains on the Board.

West is a carpenter, cabinet maker and operates a small sawmill. He takes seriously the SPBA's charge to monitor management of public lands within the Priest Basin.

"We're entering a proactive phase," he said. "We're working better with the Forest Service, and we remain determined to push the state onto the same course of good stewardship."

West added kudos for outgoing chairman Brockway. "We owe Bruce a lot of thanks for his many hours on behalf of SPBA, particularly his work in improving the group's administrative organization."

"I don't know enough about this group to sign on the dotted line as yet. I do know that I have the opportunity to personally affect the stewardship of nearly 400 acres," said SPBA Director Bruce Brockway, who owns a Priest Basin ranch. "I plan to take the time to really check INLT out."

Other SPBA members who own land in the Basin can, too. You can contact the group at: Inland Northwest Land Trust, South 1203 McClellan, Spokane, WA 99204. Phone: (509)455-9758.

SPBA's Grizzly Bear Poaching Reward Collects \$1,245 in Pledges

NO charges have been brought in the poaching of Sy the grizzly bear, but law officers continue to gather evidence, Fish and Wildlife Service officials said.

Meanwhile, an SPBA reward solicitation has collected pledges totaling \$1,245, to be contributed to a reward for information that results in the conviction of the person who killed Sy.

The Selkirk grizzly population numbers perhaps no more than 10. The bears

are protected as a threatened species.

That did not deter a poacher from shooting Sy, a 15-year-old breeding female, last November in the Willow Creek Road area near Pass Creek Pass. Sy's two young cubs were not found and are likely also dead.

SPBA quickly mounted a campaign for pledges to the reward for Sy's killer.

"Thanks to all who pledged," said Wildlife Committee Chairman Chris

Bessler. "We will keep you apprised of progress in this case."

In other grizzly news, SPBA on May 12 sponsored a slide show and discussion on the bears in Sandpoint. Wildlife photographer Buck Wilde showed photos from his forthcoming book, "In Search of the Great Bear." Afterwards, Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Suzanne Audet discussed the Selkirk bears. About 60 people attended the free show.

Change in the Forest Service

Ranger Kent Dunstan talks about reform, timber and the future

The following is an interview conducted by the SPBA Editorial Committee Chairman Bill White, with Kent Dunstan, district ranger at the Priest Lake Ranger Station.

SPBA: The United States Forest Service has taken serious hits in the recent years, that is, charges of wasting taxpayer money on the below-cost timber program, destruction of the environment by overcutting, overgrazing, polluting rivers and streams, road building into roadless areas, failing to protect species through forestry practices, fraud through timber thefts, questionable sales of Forest Service aircraft to foreign governments, etc., leading some to the conclusion that if we are to save the nation's forests we must first destroy the Forest Service. How do you respond to these critics and criticism?

Dunstan: There's probably no doubt that some of the stuff that has been in the newspapers is justified. I guess my opinion is that a lot of it has been biased in certain ways. Some of the recent stuff that has been in the papers is based upon management practices that have been ongoing historically and probably within the last three years a lot of things have changed quite substantially. I think a lot of the premises are based on old practices, but there is definitely room for improvement in forest management. We are definitely moving towards an ecosystem management approach, which I think will lead to substantially different practices than what we've had in the past. I think a large part of that is going to involve much more public involvement and evaluating the social impacts of some potential practices on the national forest.

SPBA: From what you've said, it suggests that there is a reform movement from within the Forest Service. Is that correct?

Dunstan: Definitely there is. Particularly in the last year the changes in the Forest Service have been substantial. It's been almost difficult to try to keep up with all the different types of changes. We're trying to move as fast as we can in implementing change, so it's a really interesting time right now.

SPBA: Let's focus on the Priest Basin. What is ecosystem management and what is your vision for it on federal lands within the Basin?

Dunstan: It's looking at forest management in a different scale and different time periods than we've done in the past. Also, trying to incorporate the social values of the people substantially more than what we've had in the past. We have seen quite a structural change in our vegetation on the Priest Lake Ranger



District because of fire control and timber harvests in the past. We know that in a lot of our drainages we do have some problems with watershed and fisheries and obviously that is going to have to be a focal point. Another aspect is that we do realize that Priest Lake itself is a main attractant to the valley and we will have to play a role into the scheme as we build it here for the future. For example, the use on the lake in the last five years has just grown in leaps and bounds. We're starting to see some impacts from current use levels and so obviously that's going to result probably in some different management changes as we lead on. Probably the biggest thing is that there's some dramatic changes in our vegetation and we've lost a lot of our drier habitat types. I think we're going to have to take a serious look at some of those key components. We do know that a lot of the reforestation back in the '40s was done by bringing off-site trees into the area,

which is a major concern of mine because of the potential gene pollution to our trees in this area. So, we are starting to look at that a little bit more seriously. The structure of the forest has changed substantially. A lot of it due to fire control through the years, so there's a lot of big issues in front of us that we're going to have to really take a hard look at and see where we go from here.

SPBA: Could you comment on the water quality which is presently being evaluated at the upper end of the basin, specifically the Priest Lakes, the upper and lower, and how can existing purity be held and not allowed to degrade if the human uses of the lake are multiplying by leaps and bounds?

Dunstan: For the most part, some of the preliminary water quality data on the lake still indicates that it's still fairly good quality. The testing reveals that water quality appears to improve as the water flows to the south end of the lower lake, which is unusual for most lakes. All parameters tested thus far are well within acceptable range. What that really means, we really don't know at this point. We do know that many of the streams on the Priest Lake Ranger District are showing some impacts from human use on the district. We're showing impacts on some of the habitat. We have fewer pools and the pools for the fish are shallower than what may have historically been present. We do know we have some sediment loading in a number of our streams, so I think those are going to be two real focal areas that we're going to have to concentrate on.

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SPBA: Do you see some kind of control relative to human use of the lake — and I say that by way of recognizing that certain national parks and certain other areas have restrictions on population incursions?

Dunstan: Well, that may come with time. Probably the most immediate need that I foresee is that we do have some sanitation problems. Potentially, as early as this year, we may be requiring porta-potties for all types of camping on the lake. That's one thing we are evaluating right now. So there are some short-term fixes and as we get more information we'll have to determine, at some point, that some level of use may have to be established on the lake.

SPBA: How will the attention and efforts of the Forest Service on the north end of the district be balanced with the southern part of the district, which has been heavily logged in the past 50 years? Are there trade offs?

Dunstan: There's substantial difference between the north end and the south end. Geologically there's quite a difference. On the north end, most of it's been glaciated and has a compact of glaciated tail underneath the soil mantle. On the southern end of the district, it's primarily composed of some alluvial fan, actually they're lacustrine deposits from old lakes, and sediment is probably more of a key problem on the southern end of the lake. The southern end of the district is also closer to the communities. There's been more human habitation of the southern end of the district, so obviously the impacts are probably greater on certain areas of the southern part of the district. We also know that on the north end of the district we have a number of threatened and endangered (T&E) species and so I would, at this point, feel that probably the major focal point is re-establishing the T&E, e.g. the grizzly, the caribou, potentially the bull trout, cutthroat and those types of species.

SPBA: You said in essence the major focus then might be characterized as preservation and ecosystem management in the north. Does that mean that the valleys of the southern end of the district might be looked to for timber harvest, at the exclusion of the north or at least greater timber harvest than might have been expected?

Dunstan: I don't know if I can give an answer at this point. There are just so many variables that we're just starting to discover at this point. There are some very unique features that are required for a number of the (T&E) species on the north end and so we'll just have to weigh some of those factors. I think the focus, though, on the southern end of the district will be different than the northern end. I think we'll be looking more at rehabbing the watersheds on the southern end where on the north end will be pointing more toward the (T&E) species.

SPBA: To what degree is the district timber cutting program currently driven by volume and timber targets, and how is this different from three or five years ago?

Dunstan: Three and five years ago I would say that there was considerably more emphasis on volume and saw logs. In the past three years, the emphasis has changed more towards ecosystem management, rehabbing, and although timber targets are still important, they don't carry the weight that they use to nearly as much.

SPBA: What is the present ASQ (Allowable Sale Quantity) and future ASQ?

Dunstan: In the forest plan, I believe it was set at 31 million board feet for the Priest Lake Ranger District, but I have no idea what the future ASQ will be. I anticipate that it will be something substantially lower than the 31 million.

SPBA: Are budgets within the Panhandle National Forest still largely determined by volume of timber cut?

Dunstan: Yes, timber is a large portion of our overall forest budget and fields associated with timber sales receive a large portion of it. In the last five years, I think the proportion of the other budgets is increasing and the timber budgets are decreasing. For example, this year, in fiscal year '94, there has been a net decrease of about a little over \$3 million on the forest.

SPBA: Have the Priest Lake, Newport and Sandpoint districts experienced reduced funding in the past few years, and does this mean layoffs of lower- and mid-level technologists whose expertise is needed for a defensible forest program?

Dunstan: Like I've said, budgets have decreased. This year I think we're looking at probably a net decrease of approximately \$100,000 compared to last year. The budget outlooks do indicate that there will be more substantial reductions in the future. We do know that we're going to have to have reduced employment on the forest and consequently we are starting to look at identifying positions that we will probably not be able to fund in the future. Many of those positions are related with timber, engineering and road construction. There are some support functions that have also been identified, but not near to the extent as probably the timber functions.

SPBA: Are the corporate forests, such as Plum Creek Corp., overcut within the Selkirks and do their cutting programs place additional pressure on the federal lands to make up timber after the corporate lands are exhausted?

Dunstan: Most of the corporate lands are still actively harvesting. Have they exerted pressure on the Forest Service to cover for that? At this point I would say absolutely not.

SPBA: The environmental movement has gained a great deal of steam in the past decade. There are around 1,200 grassroots organizations in the country, plus numerous large, national and global, organizations. From your experience, has the environmental movement been an asset or a plague on the traditional managers of the nation's resources?

Dunstan: Their movement has been extremely strong. They've played a major key role in shaping the Forest Service of the future. So, you would have to say that they have been an extreme asset to forest management. Government has been very slow to make changes and pressures from not only the environmental movement, but all types of special interests are starting to weigh much more heavily in the philosophy of the Forest Service.

SPBA: Thank you, Kent. Are there any last words that you might want to see in Sightlines relative to the Priest Lake Station?

Dunstan: Just that as we're moving into a new era of forest management, I encourage the public to work with us and share information and ideas with us as we go along.

Journal of an SPBA Volunteer

The backbone of a non-profit group like the SPBA is in the efforts of volunteers who pitch in to help preserve and protect our magnificent Priest Basin. What's it like to volunteer for the kind of projects in which the SPBA is often looking for help? Just ask Kate and Harry Batey of Beaver Creek. Following are excerpts from Kate's journal as a volunteer for a pair of past projects.

'BAG the bryoria — August;
Hunt for the redd — October.”
For fish and wildlife recovery in the Selkirk-Priest Basin, that is what my calendar in 1992 read.

August 8: At the Priest Lake Ranger Station our team met Eric Romingar, the caribou researcher from Washington State University, who briefed us on the nutrition program for his young captive caribou. His program is directed toward saving our woodland caribou in the wild.

Harry Batey and I, and two young friends from Beaver Creek, Issac and John, joined other SPBA members, Nancy and Bill White, David Heikes and two daughters, a couple from Newport who works for county weed control, and Tim Layser, biologist at the Priest Lake Ranger Station, and his young son Urie. We would be gathering lichen for the caribou.

Eric warmed us to his task with his portfolio of pictures of his young charges from their first days, through gamboling early youth to their present readiness to be introduced to the browse they would find in the wild: bryoria and usnea lichen.

Tim led us to a large opening in a forest of mostly tamarack and some fir, all of which was heavily hung with the chestnut fronds of the bryoria and the golden green usnea. Some of us had thought that all that stuff hanging off branches meant sick trees. Not so.

As Tim pulled branches to our work area, each of us stuffed some bags with straight bryoria and other bags with a mix of bryoria and usnea. Caribou in the wild browse on both. Bryoria is the most nutritious and Eric had us all nipping off a bit, chewing it, and agreeing, yes, not bad — lemony.

We bagged and bagged and lunched

and socialized and bagged some more. One of those 35-gallon black plastic bags would feed a caribou for just a day or so at WSU. Eric would take our good day's work to introduce to his caribou.

In February 1993, Eric would take them up north of us here into a mountainous area above Sullivan Lake. He would release them for the daylight hours, track them, check choices of lichen, choices of trees, lead them to a corral at night and continue to take data in this manner for some weeks.

He and they (and we with our modest contribution) would have added to what we know and need to know about management of forests for caribou recovery.

• • •

October 10: At Nordman, Harry and I met other team members who would hunt for bull trout (Dolly Varden) redds, their number and location in the Hughes Fork of the Priest River north of Priest Lake. Fisheries Biologist Lisa Howden was our leader. There was Dennis Riley, Brad Mengay, Mike Bolt, Rhonda from the ranger station, SPBA members Pam Aunan and Cathy Rosenberg, and two Boy Scouts, Jeb and Mac.

Just downstream of Hughes Meadows we stopped the cars, shimmied into our chest waders, followed Lisa down the Hughes Fork, and there she found us a bull trout redd. It was an area of clean sand swished by the tail and body of a big female, the nest for eggs that a lurking male would shed his milt over. We would be looking for such nests up the tributaries Lisa assigned us.

She gave us a little page of map that showed the area we would soon be in when we parked up at Hughes Meadows. Harry and I would go up Bench Creek; others grouped in twos, threes and fours had been assigned Jackson and Ledge creeks, Hughes Fork downstream of us at Poacher's Hole, and upstream of the meadow, and one pair went to Mushegran Creek in the Gold Creek drainage.

Harry and I skirted the meadow in our awkward attire, map, lunch and water in hand. I tied a thong around my waders at the waist with a staff attached. We had to cross the meadow which, since the last time I was there, had become a pond. Later I asked Dennis what they do about the beavers. Well, you don't do anything. That's the natural and good evolution of the system. The beavers create wetlands and habitat for many forms of life, along with redesigning the meadow.

For the next couple of hours Harry and I climbed, walked, crawled up, in, or alongside Bench Creek. It was strenuous going around enormous cedar dead falls and beaver dams. We came out on a gorgeous old growth of cedar forest and some handsome burned relics and really wanted to push on and on upstream, but Lisa had asked us to return by 4 p.m.

As others slogged in, they reported nine redds up Hughes, four at the Poacher's Hole, four up Jackson, and so forth. Harry and I found none we could confirm up Bench. Maybe next year some big females will be ready to return to their natal stream up Bench. We jollied one another about the degree of difficulty of each of our streams: Was yours a class 1, 2 or 6? It was a special experience for all, and data for Lisa to apply to recovery of bull trout in Priest Lake.

During the last three Aprils, Harry and I have aided in leatherback sea turtle recovery on an island off Puerto Rico. For

those creatures we did not need to collect jelly fish, their favorite browse, but did monitor nest building and egg laying as each giant female heaved herself ashore. She's the size of two caribou for weight.

It is altogether Eden-like on those sweeps of sand in the middle of the night, which is when we monitor, but the attraction of aiding that life form in that setting is no stronger, no more moving, no more meaningful than aiding caribou and bull trout recovery in our own splendid Basin.

***They reported
nine redds up
Hughes, four
at the
Poacher's
Hole, four up
Jackson, and
so forth.***

Small Loggers

Continued from page 1

destruction in our state's forests any more, or the 'welfare-to-bankruptcy' agenda they have for Idaho's gyppo loggers. It's better for our communities to have 100 jobs in the woods forever than 300 jobs for a couple of years, until the landscape is slicked clean."

SPBA filed its lawsuit more than two years ago. First District Court Judge Craig Kosonen dismissed it last July, saying the group did not have legal standing to challenge the Land Board's timber decisions. SPBA appealed; the Idaho Supreme Court is expected to hear arguments on that issue this summer.

SLC has asked the court to appear as an "amicus" in the case — a friend of the SPBA in its attempt to open state courts to all Idahoans with legitimate interests in the management of the lands.

Last month Idaho's largest union, the Idaho Education Association, filed a similar petition but withdrew its request after Joe Hinson, executive vice president of the Intermountain Forest Industry Association, wrote to Idaho legislators saying they should consider cutting teachers' salaries from the state's education budget in response to IEA's petition.

Hinson suggested legislators should "reduce the public school budget by the amount of future timber revenues" and apply the funds, about \$85 million dollars a year, to a timber industry public relations campaign called "Cutting Trees Builds Schools."

In his letter, Hinson said Idaho teachers needed to learn a lesson they hadn't

learned yet.

Hinson's action prompted protest across the state. Several Idaho newspapers carried opinions denouncing Hinson's conduct, one likening it to extortion.

"The IFIA just plain threatened the teachers' livelihoods if they dared to exercise their democratic right to be heard. The message was clear: Speak out and you'll regret it," said Dave Boswell, an attorney for the SPBA.

"It seems there is no boundary they won't cross to retain control over the timberlands and the Land Board; they'll gut the school budget, force the gyppo onto welfare, wreck the forests and ruin the economies of Idaho's rural communities. More and groups like the SLC can see what's happening in the forests and in Idaho's small towns. It's a form of colonialism — keep the people poor, ignorant and afraid while you log off all our public resources for private profit."

SPBA Chairman Gordon West said the SLC's petition to file a brief in support of judicial review of Land Board decisions shows Hinson's group and the Land Board are the real obstacles to reform of state forest management.

"One thing seems clear," he said. "Neither the Land Board nor big timber interests represent Idaho's small loggers and small communities. To change things, we need to empower local folks to shape their own destinies and prevent exploitation by the big political-industrial alliance.

"With so many of our communities up against the wall, I think we will begin to see more small groups banding together on these kinds of issues in the future."

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