



SightLines

SELKIRK CONSERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

FALL 2003

SCA CHALLENGES IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LANDS OVER MISMANAGEMENT

By Mark Sprengel

From its inception, the Selkirk Conservation Alliance (formerly Selkirk Priest-Basin Association) has been at odds with the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) over management practices on state lands east of Priest Lake.

Comprising some of the most beautiful and biologically valuable property in the US, the Priest Lake State Forest has, unfortunately, been sorely mistreated over the years. Thousands of acres of clearcuts and spider-webs of roads have resulted in degraded water quality, destroyed wildlife habitat, devastated scenery, and diminution of the public trust.

Quite simply, the state of Idaho is decades behind other public land management agencies and indeed, even some corporate timber firms, in understanding (much less implementing) modern practices of responsible forest stewardship and conservation.

While federal agencies such as the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have come to recognize that healthy ecosystems are biologically complex entities that depend on maintenance of all their "parts", the IDL still operates under an archaic management paradigm that treats forests as a cash crop.

A few examples illustrate the point.

The Forest Service and even many timber corporations now refrain from logging old growth trees, acknowledging the important function they serve in healthy forests. The IDL is still aggressively targeting old growth for liquidation.

Federal agencies now acknowledge the deleterious ecological impacts of roads. IDL continues to propose miles of new road construction in an already severely roaded landscape.

While federal and some private entities make allowances for wildlife and operate under management plans that

strive to protect threatened and endangered species, such as grizzly bear, woodland caribou, Canada lynx, gray wolf, bull trout, as well as species such as wolverine, fisher, westslope cutthroat trout, etc., the IDL persists in degrading wildlife habitat.

Where 300-foot riparian buffers are the widely recognized norm for protection of water quality and fisheries habitat, the IDL relies on an abysmal and scientifically insupportable state Forest Practices Act that prescribes 75-foot buffers on class one (and 30-foot buffers on class two) streams.

Where federal agencies are making at least some attempts to limit damage from all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), motorcycles and snowmobiles, IDL permits motorized "recreationists" to virtually run amok causing extensive damage to streams, plant communities and wildlife habitat.

(Continued on page 4)



Visiting paddlers experience the silence and natural serenity of the Thoroughfare (above) and Upper Priest Lake (left).

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE: WE HAVE WORK TO DO

By Mark Sprengel

I realize that many of you who live and/or recreate at Priest Lake cannot often venture into the mountains that provide the backdrop to this spectacularly scenic lake we all appreciate and are so concerned about.

Consequently, it is easy to miss (or dismiss) the logging and road building that occur out-of-sight or back in the "hinterlands." It is easy perhaps to forget that the purity of our lake and streams, the abundance of fish and the health of the entire ecosystem depend on maintaining all the connected "pieces"... each one instrumental in the creation of this magnificent and biologically unique place.

The 2,000-year old cedars, the small mountain streams, the quiet fens, the "disjunct" rare plant communities, the endangered wildlife hanging on by a thread...all contribute in their particular way to making Priest Lake such a unique and precious marvel.

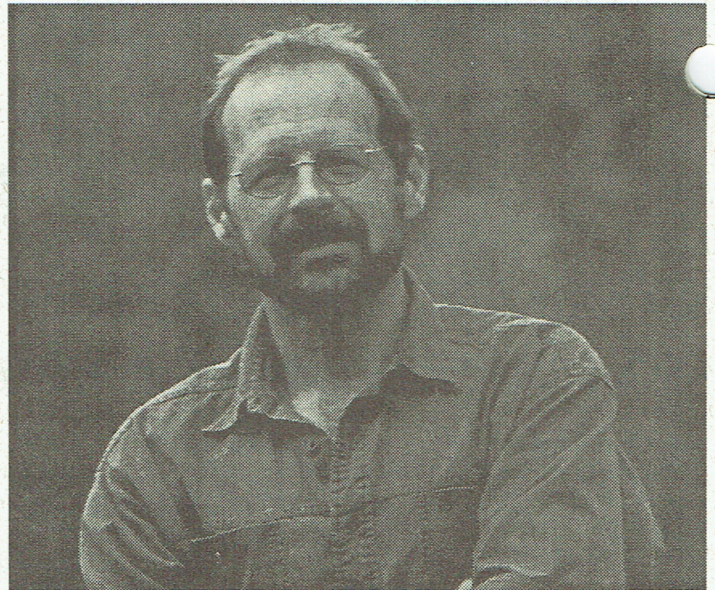
Like the gradual diminution of the faculties of sight and hearing, incremental degradation is often overlooked—not noticed until it becomes severe. The most dangerous threats are indeed insidious.

Perhaps the most ominous threat is the fact that we live in a nation whose population is fast-approaching 300 million people. That figure is projected to double in the near future. Population growth, like logging in the back-country, occurs, for the most part, unnoticed. Similarly however, the incremental and cumulative impacts threaten the integrity of the whole system.

Each one of these individuals for instance, will almost certainly "demand" to live in a fine home, recreate in lovely surroundings, own cars, attend sporting events, and consume the earth's resources with a minimum of constraints.

Each one of us has an area of influence...and our footprints are everywhere.

So what does this portend for Selkirk species such as grizzly bears, gray wolves, and mountain caribou...creatures that require large areas free from the infrastructures of human "progress"?



Questions abound.

Can we protect the purity of our lakes and our crystalline streams with hordes of ATVs, motorcycles, jet skis and snowmobiles, rampaging across the landscape?

And what of more subjective assets...such as solitude, silence, and opportunities for contemplation? Can mystery and dreams exist in the cacophony of multitudes?

Can a culture that worships the law of the marketplace entrust its sacred places to the "invisible hand" of rapacity? Can we, indeed, have perpetual growth on a finite sphere?

While only time can provide the answers, the portents are certainly troubling.

So why, in the face of so many threats, do we persist? Each one of us has his or her individual reasons and, in my case at least, those reasons seem to change from day to day. Love for the wild, certainly, drives everything. Manifesting as anger, stubbornness, yearning and, more and more as I grow older, gratitude, it seems like I have no choice in the matter.

(continued on page 6)

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR EMERITUS

Joanne Hirabayashi's recent letter to SCA's membership states compelling reasons for financial support to enable SCA to continue confronting serious threats to the legacy of Idaho's Crown Jewel and its surroundings.

For SCA members with homes on the Lake, their extended families, friends and vacationing visitors, the mysticism of Priest Lake for generations has been a reverent part of our lives.

In recognition of Priest Lake's specialness, Idaho's legislature in its 1991 House Bill 319 created a state-funded Priest Lake Management Plan to protect and enhance in perpetuity the pristine qualities of its officially dedicated "Idaho's Crown Jewel." SCA's parent, the Selkirk Priest Basin Association (SPBA) was an active participant in both the formation and application of the program. Harry Batey and I as directors exerted SPBA influence on relevant committees.

The Management Plan was increasingly effective, but in these trying times of crass commercialism for the sake of selfish short-term economic benefit, the dictates and purpose in House Bill 319 no longer apply and allow attempts that can override and irretrievably destroy the values held so near and dear by many of us.

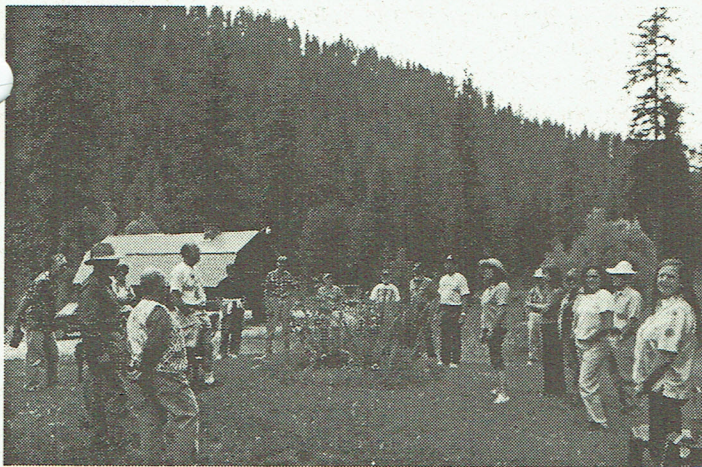
Unlike restitution for material loss that is provided by means of insurance protection programs through payment of premiums, there is no protection available to restore desecration of Idaho's Crown Jewel other than prevention by forestalling it.

The Selkirk Conservation Alliance with its proven good record is the only body standing up to keep our treasure sacrosanct. Its success rests with your full support and participation.

—Jules Gindraux, Director Emeritus



SCA'S CELEBASIN 2003



BOB DENNER EXPLAINING THE HISTORY OF THE EXPERIMENTAL FOREST TO SOME OF THE CELEBASIN PARTICIPANTS.

By Bill White

Celebasin: A grand time was had by all. We met August 16 at the Priest River Experimental Forest—one of the oldest forestry research centers in the U.S. The Research Branch of the U.S. Forest Service operates the center. Mr. Bob Denner is the manager of the research station.

The afternoon was rich in information and activities for members of SCA. Mr. Denner provided an informative nature walk to review experimental plots where research is an ongoing activity.

The nature walk was followed by the annual meeting of the membership and SCA board of directors. Joanne Hirabayashi, chairperson of the SCA, reviewed the past year's activities of the organization. Mark Sprengel, executive director of SCA, went through ongoing and future planned projects of SCA, the list of which is ambitiously long and broad.

Ms. Jenny Taylor, USFS wildlife biologist from the Coeur d'Alene district office, addressed the members with a fascinating slide show and talk on the variety, distribution, and habits of bats, particularly those found in the southern Selkirks and Priest Basin.

Then we all enjoyed SCA's deliciously famous buffet dinner. As always, members contributed many fine dining delights. To end the day we had a raffle. Beautifully hand crafted planters and bird houses, created with natural materials found in the basin by Mary Smith were won by several lucky members. Many other fine items of art were also donated by members and raffled off. Some members made cash donations to SCA. Everyone's presence and contributions were greatly appreciated. As always, Celebasin was a great day for the organization.

SCA WISH LIST:

1. Laptop computer
2. Power-point projector
3. GPS receiver
4. File cabinets
5. Printer
6. High-speed copier

With much appreciation ...

A heartfelt and very large thank you to our members for the support you have been offering to SCA in these troubled financial times, and also for the responses you have made to the telephone and written survey of member concerns that we are putting together. If you intended to donate but haven't done it yet, or want to share your thoughts, now is a good time to do that. We still want to hear from you.

As one way of responding to the comments you have brought up, we plan to include in each issue of *Sightlines* a "Follow-up" column addressing one of those concerns. In this issue we talk about wind generators.

PROPOSED WIND ENERGY GENERATES CONTROVERSY

By Joanne Hirabayashi Last year the State of Idaho listed the Selkirk Crest as one of the top sites for the proposed location of a wind generator system. Since then some SCA members have expressed concerns, others have suggested it might be a good idea. Here's an update with arguments for and against.

PRO: Wind turbines can provide a cheap, clean, renewable source of energy and are to be preferred to polluting electrical power plants which are dependent on oil.

We agree to the general principal. However the question of how environmentally friendly and how cheap the energy such a system would produce depends on its location. The visual impact is the least of our concerns.

CONS: In mountainous country animals and migrating birds tend to travel along the ridges. Wind turbines improperly located have the potential to lead to bird deaths, particularly for birds which could fly into them at night. A wind generator system requires a supporting network of regularly traveled roads to the generators themselves and to the sub-stations which collect the energy generated by the turbines and then send it along to larger power stations. So the turbines themselves can be deadly, but the system of roads and necessary transfer stations would inevitably result in logging, further spread of invasive noxious weeds, continued disruption of wildlife habitat and major problems of erosion and wash-outs as a consequence of road building, all serious concerns. Furthermore, since drainages such as Two Mouth, Indian Creek and Hunt Creek are steep, many more miles of criss-crossing roads would be needed than in a case where the turbines were set on level ground.

Dealing with such problems and other negative aspects of placing a wind generator system on the Selkirk Crest and maintaining it over the years would certainly result in economic consequences for taxpayers.

The most recent information we have indicates that Idaho is currently looking at open land in southeastern Idaho as one preferred site. We'll keep you posted.

IDL Continued from page 1

Because of the abysmal situation on state lands, and recognizing that we cannot protect the quality of the lake environment unless we protect the quality of the surrounding environment, SCA resolved almost three years ago to reform state forest practices and the archaic management model that drives the IDL.

Based on our past experience in the courts, we realized that Idaho officials have effectively insulated the Department of Lands from reform by the state's citizens via channels available at the state level.

Realizing that federal statutes such as the Endangered Species Act (ESA) provided the only means available to concerned Idaho citizens, we began, (thanks to generous help from Sieracki Consulting), development of a comprehensive Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database showing wildlife habitat, soil types, stream classifications, topography, road locations, plant habitat and cover types, as well as extensive layers of analysis incorporating a large number of other variables. Compiling this information was a necessary first step to prove our case in court against the IDL.

In addition, we obtained reams of documents under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Public Information Request (PIR), conducted extensive monitoring trips, compiled a voluminous photographic inventory, and worked with various other agencies to obtain information necessary to proceed with litigation.

We are very ably represented by attorneys Laird Lucas and Laurie Rule from "Advocates for the West" . . . one of the

top public-interest law firms in the Northwest. We recruited other environmental organizations (Idaho Conservation League and Defenders of Wildlife) to join us in the case and to buttress our arguments, have secured the services of a number of experts. Barring a reasonable settlement offer from the state, we will file suit in the very near future alleging violations of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and possibly other statutes.

It is important that SCA members understand the significance of our state lands project.

Successful resolution, either through litigation or settlement, will not only go a long way towards protecting important habitat for grizzly bears, caribou, bull trout and other species on the brink of extinction, but will also be instrumental in protecting the overall quality of the Priest Lake Basin environment.

Immediate concerns about degraded recreation opportunities and scenery, while important, pale in significance to the negative impacts IDL management is having on the long-term health of the Priest Lake Basin. Moreover, biologists now recognize that the Selkirk Mountain ecosystem is a vital link in the so-called "Yellowstone to Yukon" corridor.

Essentially, what this means is, efforts to maintain the full suite of species that have inhabited this landscape for millennia, require we protect (and restore) critical genetic and biologic connecting links between increasingly isolated populations of rare animals. A quick look at a map of the south Selkirk Mountains readily reveals the importance of state lands to the realization of this objective.

Butting like a sore thumb between National Forest land to the east and west, the Priest Lake State Forest comprises some of the most valuable wildlife habitat left in the US for five species identified by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as threatened or endangered as well as several others that warrant such protection.

The mountains east of Priest Lake are part of a vital connecting corridor linking endangered species ranging from Canada's Yukon in the north stretching south all the way to Yellowstone National Park. Unfortunately, on Idaho state lands within this corridor, imperiled animals are still being sacrificed for the sake of wood pulp and two-by-fours.

It is worth pointing out that while Idaho has lost hundreds of millions of dollars of state school endowment funds gambling in the stock market, state officials can't summon the resolve to protect a biological legacy dating back millennia.

It is unfortunate indeed that Idaho, whose natural resources are the envy of almost all other states, has a political establishment that is almost totally oblivious to the enormous value of the state's wildlife, clean water, and forests . . . and the even greater value these assets will have in the future as our nation's increasingly urban human population continues to expand by millions every year.

No doubt this myopic mentality will one day be roundly condemned by wiser generations but in the interim, SCA is determined to do all we can to limit (and ultimately repair) the damage.

Unlike those who envision rampant resource extraction and development for Priest Lake, mimicking the disastrous dollar-driven agendas that have afflicted places like Lake Tahoe and Lake Coeur d'Alene, SCA is working for a different future.

Instead of a sea of clearcuts and logging roads, polluted water, vanishing wildlife, condos, marinas, jet skis and ATV raceways, we believe the most promising future for Priest Lake is one that protects and restores our forests, our rare and fascinating wildlife, the purity of our lakes and streams, and the silence that provides respite from the frenzy and noise of the modern world.

It is well known that rare things become priceless. In the world of the future, these are assets that will be increasingly difficult to find.



FOREST ACCESS FOR WILDLIFE FIRST

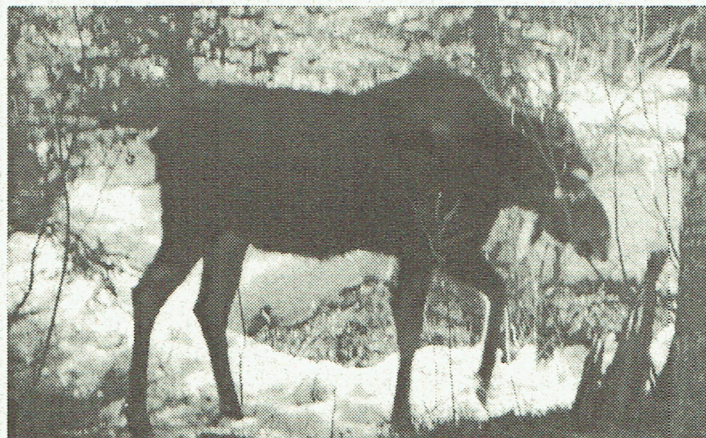
By John Stuart About 5 years ago we had a very reliable anecdotal report of a wolverine hanging out in the vicinity of a logging operation near Boyer Mountain (20 miles west of Newport, WA). The loggers had reported it to the landowner and tracks were fresh in the snow. Last summer (2002), the young collared grizzly bear that was illegally shot near Lamb Creek, Priest Lake, had cavorted around earlier in the summer near Calispell Peak, west of Cusick, WA. It would have had to swim the Pend Oreille River to make that trip. Wildlife biologists as well as amateur naturalists have reported a few sightings or tracks in winter of fisher, both in the Idaho and Washington Selkirks.

This August of 2003, I had the unique experience of finding young fledglings of all three north American accipiters within a week's time. The Goshawks were near Sullivan Lake in northern Pend Oreille county, the Cooper's hawks were near Newport, WA. And the Sharp-shinned hawks were near the Roosevelt Grove of Ancient Cedars in the Upper Priest River drainage.

I feel privileged to live in a place where both rare and common creatures also find homes. The Selkirks are still home to all the wildlife species that were here 200 years ago. Some, like the bull trout, woodland caribou and wolverine are hanging on by the skin of their teeth, but they are still here. The historical reality of the Selkirks, however, is that it is one of the last large refuges for North American wildlife and the people who like their backcountry wild and woolly. We must take care that it remains that way.

This brings me to the main subject of this article, the increasing use of off-highway vehicles (OHV) on national forests and other public lands. At a meeting a few weeks back, I heard several OHV riders complaining about their "access" to the national forests. They felt that because the Forest Service was putting gates on unused logging roads and using the forests to protect animal species, (putting up gates to limit human motorized contact with threatened and endangered species) that their—the OHV users—access was being threatened! What a shock to me! And what chutzpah, for them to assume that the National Forests should automatically be open to such a use. The gates, in some instances are being used to protect threatened and endangered habitat. But many roads are being gated to save taxpayer money on road maintenance.

Teddy Roosevelt established the first national forest reserves specifically to limit the uses to which the loosely controlled public forests were then being submitted. The 19th century pillage and plunder of forests in the Great Lakes area showed that without some limits, western U.S. forests would quickly fall to the greed that accompanied short-term thinking. The original goals set for the national forests are still their highest uses: filtering of water (watershed protection), and wildlife habitat protection. These remain the big goals for the simple reasons that they are basic to the life of all living things, humans included, and they are already in place naturally, without us having to lift a finger to help. The wildlife goal is unique because large federal land holdings are now the only home/habitat for many species of animals. The increase in human activities on these lands can only degrade this habitat further. Hunters, fisherfolk and all national forest fans should be concerned.



If OHV use can be accommodated within these long-term goals, then the Forest Service will need to do a comprehensive assessment, set access limits, make new legal authority for enforcement and have monitoring in place. But the big question remains. If the vast majority of the lower 48 states is already "developed" and being intensively used by people, why is it necessary to motorize the little remaining land that is quiet, secluded and wild? Citizens have always had the right to visit their national forests. But does that right extend to any technological innovation that people choose to ride or use within the forests? This is a very pointed question because of Forest Service regulations regarding trail-building. As it now stands, if ordinary citizens choose to build their own trail (which OHV users are now doing), the FS cannot stop them if "resource damage" cannot be proven. In other words, it appears that motorized users could build their own trail system with complete impunity.

The Colville National Forest is beginning a "collaborative" process to see if it can find a way of dealing with OHVs with the eventual goal of having this process become an official part of its Forest Plan.

SCA has not established an official policy regarding OHVs but we are involved with this process and would very much like to hear from our membership concerning OHV use on both Idaho Panhandle National Forest and Colville forests.

LOON CENSUS



By John Stuart On July 18th, one of our beautifully sunny days this summer, SCA made an attempt to locate loons on the Priest Lakes. Tim Layser, wildlife biologist at the Priest Lake Forest District was kind enough to escort me in the FS power boat. We made a lakeshore survey of the northern 2/3 of the big lake, from Kalispel Bay north, and completed a tour of the shore of the upper lake. Plenty of boats were present on both lakes (even though it was a week-day) and if any loons were present, they were staying well hidden. We found no loons.

Bill Fouts and a friend, both of the Newport/Usk area, also made a trip to Yocum Lake, about halfway between Cusick and Lone, WA. There were a pair of loons on this lake a couple of years ago, but no apparent nesting. Unfortunately, no loons showed this year on Yocum Lake.

If you have heard loons on any lakes in your area this summer, we would very much like to hear about it. Please contact us!!



E.D. MESSAGE (Continued from page 2)

But increasingly...gratitude. Because I feel blessed—though I do not claim to know by what agency.

I've spent the past 25 years living in one of the most beautiful places in the United States. Prior to moving here, I was fortunate enough to be able to hike the 2,600-mile length of the Pacific Crest Trail from Canada to Mexico along the spine of the Cascade and Sierra Nevada mountains. Two years before that, I walked the 2,100-mile long Appalachian Trail from Maine to Georgia. There have been many trails in many places since.

I believe I speak with authority when I say that our lakes, mountains, forests and wildlife rival any place in the country. Our home, despite all the damage, has attributes worthy of a National Park.

Though it has been severely injured, I believe... must believe...that the damage can be repaired, the system restored. You will notice that I did not say "protected." It is not enough that we strive to protect what is left. We must restore that which has been degraded. The work is a duty... and a privilege.

We are living in a very difficult time. While assaults on the environment come from all directions, funding necessary to carry on our work has been severely reduced. I can say without reservation that this is the most difficult time in SCA's history. Financial support from foundations has virtually vanished and major contributions from some of our wealthier members have diminished significantly. Ironically, fewer resources are available in this time of greatest need.

I am all too aware of the interminable requests for money each one of you is bombarded with every day. Everyone seems to have their hand out and good causes abound. Certainly, many organizations are deserving of support.

So why should you give to SCA? Well, maybe because this is our home. We live and recreate here. We care about the same places you do. Those footprints in front of you on that mountain trail were probably left by one of us. That canoe you see on Upper Priest Lake is likely ours. Attend a public meeting and you can bet that we'll be there with you. See something that concerns you? Give us a call...you can count on us to look into it.

The writer and philosopher Wendell Berry once said that "...landscapes should not be used by people who do not live in them and share their fate." The truth of his observation is all around us.

Similarly, I believe that landscapes are best protected by the people who live in them and share their fate.

The staff and board of directors of the Selkirk Conservation Alliance do live in the region. All of us are acutely aware that we share in the fate of our forests, lakes, plants and wildlife. For these reasons, and others too numerous to mention, I believe this organization is strongly deserving of your support. Please help us continue our work.

In closing, I encourage you to call or drop by our office. I look forward to hearing from you and welcome the opportunity to tell you about our projects.

To advocates for the natural world and its wild places I can only say...we have work to do.

SCA PROJECTS, ISSUES, AND EVENTS:

1. Idaho Department of Lands lawsuit
2. Idaho Panhandle National Forest Motorized Access Plan
3. Idaho Panhandle Forest Plan Revision
4. Lower West Branch Priest River TMDL
5. Kallispel Timber Sale
6. Chips Ahoy Timber Sale
7. Gardin-Taco Timber Sale (Appealed 9-2-03)
8. Lost Granite Squirrel Timber Sale
9. Lakeface/Lamb Stewardship Project
10. Sullivan Lake Winter Recreation Plan
11. Colville Motorized Access
12. South Fork Mountain Stimson ANILCA Access
13. Grouse Grizzly Bear Management Unit FOIA
14. Priest Lake Motorized Recreation
15. WA. State DNR Monitoring Project
16. Bull Trout Critical Habitat
17. Quartz-Cottonwood Road Project
18. South Selkirk Habitat Mapping Grant Administration
19. Special Outings & Events

* For further information, contact Mark Sprengel at the SCA office.

Sprengel Takes E.D. Position

At the board's request, Mark Sprengel has agreed to become the SCA's Executive Director following the resignation of Jessica Ray. Many members know Mark as our Forest Watch and wildlife specialist and researcher. Mark brings many years of experience and commitment to the organization and we feel very fortunate to have him take on this new responsibility.



SCA'S LITTER PICKUP: Grab your favorite work gloves and come help with SCA's Biannual Litter Pickup. Since 1990 SCA volunteers have been picking up trash along Highway 57 from mileposts 18 to 20. We meet at the north end of the High Bridge. Our next pickup is scheduled for Sunday, October 5 at 10:00AM. Refreshments and goodies are provided after the pickup. Thank you to all who have volunteered in the past, and to Amy Daniels for all her help. We hope to see some new happy faces in the future. Please contact Amy at 448-9001 with any questions.



SCA FILES GARDIN-TACO ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL

By Mark Sprengel

On September 2nd, SCA filed an administrative appeal, along with the Lands Council and Kettle Range Conservation Group, of the Gardin-Taco timber sale on the Colville National Forest.

Gardin-Taco is an enormous 13,200-acre timber sale located in the Newport Ranger District. As is so often the case these days, the project is being billed by the Forest Service as an "ecosystem restoration" project.

SCA believes that while true ecosystem "restoration" plans may have merit in certain situations, much harm can occur with so-called "restoration" projects that are really little more than timber sales in sheep's clothing. While Gardin-Taco proposes some activities that we support, the lack of a scientifically appropriate soils analysis coupled with plans for more road construction forced us to oppose this project. Consequently, SCA wrote the soils component of the appeal while our co-appellants focused on other aspects of the Forest Service plan.

SCA's position is very clear. As long as the Forest Service refuses to conduct proper scientific assessments on proposed activities, we are going to litigate to stop those projects. Moreover, as long as the agency continues to construct roads, we are going to continue to file lawsuits.

Our organization believes it is time to stop bulldozing scars across the landscape.

When a Forest Service proposal is truly designed to restore an ecosystem's function and resilience then we will support it. When the agency fails to do the requisite scientific analysis; when it proposes to construct more roads; when it fails to address many of the most significant problems affecting an area in order to expedite logging; then we will file an administrative appeal and, if necessary, litigate to stop that project.

The Forest Service's own scientists have identified the agency's road network as the most ecologically destructive feature on the landscape. SCA believes it is therefore unconscionable to carve more of these linear scars across the land in the name of "ecosystem restoration."

By the same token, soil is the basis for forest health. In heavily impacted areas like Gardin-Taco, the soil has, by the Forest Service's own admission, been seriously degraded by logging, road building, all-terrain vehicle depredations, cattle grazing, noxious plant incursions, and a host of other human-caused impacts.

We believe therefore, that it must be a priority, (and regulations indeed demand) that the Forest Service properly assess the current condition of the soil and take appropriate steps to avoid causing more damage. Quite simply, SCA maintains the agency should be focusing on repairing the damage it has created in the past rather than exacerbating existing degraded conditions.

As our appeal (or lawsuit) progresses, we will keep you informed.

VERBATIM

IN THEIR SUMMER 2003 newsletter, the Bonner County Economic Development Corporation includes among their list of values and principles: "Encourage prudent growth that the County can reasonably accommodate, by pursuing strategies intended to diversify and expand the economic base. *Focus on the quality and long-term impact of decisions that affect the County to be sure they are socially and environmentally responsible."

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION HAS taken the first steps forward dismantling historic wild forest protections—one state at a time. With its announcement that it would "retain" the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, but with exemptions, the administration has carved out loopholes large enough for Paul Bunyon to stroll through.

Time and again, Americans have shown an overwhelming support for protecting these last wild forests, and the courts have agreed that the process and intent of the roadless rule are sound. Unfortunately, it now appears that the Bush administration has not been listening but instead has tuned its ears to its allies in the timber industry.

We can do better than turn our last wild places over to the timber industry.

These special areas should be protected.

—PLANET, Sierra Club Activist Resource, July/Aug 2003

"WE HAVEN'T SEEN KEMPTHORNE really try and press any positive environmental issues nor have we seen him actively oppose any environmental issues with a few exceptions," said Roger Singer the Idaho director for the Sierra Club. "He just isn't an active governor."

—The Spokesman-Review, June 25, 2003

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES rejects a proposal to concentrate fire prevention funds on fuel reduction in close proximity to threatened communities, and opts instead to allow continued taxpayer-subsidized logging of remote wild forests while blocking citizens from challenging these timber sales in court.

—Sierra Club, July 2003

IDAHO'S POPULATION HAS BOOMED, especially since the mid-90s. In general, the newcomers are conservative and urban. Today, Idahoans with independent politics and a strong outdoor ethic—once the norm—rarely assert political viability, either as a voting block or candidates for office. What pass now for "pro-business" values are actually anti-regulatory, anti-environment and, in many cases, anti-community.

—Rick Johnson, Executive Director, Idaho Conservation League in *The Idaho Conservationist*, Summer 2003





Water Water Water

By Kate Batey None of it is new. Four and one half billion years old and it's not the last drop. The first drop is still with us. We drink, eat, pee, cry it; sneeze it, thirst for it. Love to get in it, love to get out of it. Drown in it, are born in it, are made of it. There really hasn't been one drop subtracted since the first day.

I mean we drink and eat Abraham, Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, Hitler, Gandhi, Roosevelt, Socrates, Yeats, our dead uncles, aunts, moms, dads, small children who died too soon. And our pets.

Someone show me where I'm wrong.

I'm not saying we should go about being profligate with H₂O, not saying it's forever inviolable. It husbands itself with our wise and weird attentions. When we divert it out of cycle—out of storage chambers (glaciers, mountain peaks, icebergs, aquifers, the trees, mosses, soils)—when we muddy it, mix it with the poisons, car wash, lawn care, and toss it all in rivers, oceans, drains, the end of the “forever inviolable” might arrive sooner rather than later.

And none of this is new.

Join the SCA

*Support the Selkirk Conservation Alliance
by becoming a member!*

Our newsletter, funded entirely by member contributions, keeps you informed of natural resources issues within the Priest Basin, and offers regular updates on the efforts of the SCA to promote environmental excellence. Now is the time to give to the environment that sustains us all.

Make a contribution, keep *SightLines* coming regularly. Dues and donations are tax-deductible.

Enroll me as a member of the SCA. Enclosed are my dues:

	Individual	Family
Limited Income		
(Living Lightly)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20
Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

To help more, I'm enclosing an additional contribution:

☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500

Name(s) _____

Address (winter & summer) _____

Dates available at each _____

Winter Home Phone _____

Summer Home Phone _____

Email Address _____

**Mail to SELKIRK CONSERVATION ALLIANCE,
P.O. Box 1809, PRIEST RIVER, IDAHO 83856**

SightLines is the newsletter of the SELKIRK CONSERVATION ALLIANCE, P.O. Box 1809, Priest River, ID 83856 / (208) 448-2971 / sca@supersat2.net. Copyright © 2003 by SCA: Mark Sprengel, Executive Director; Joanne Hirabayashi, Board Chairperson; John Stuart, Secretary/Treasurer. Directors: Bill White, Steve Booth, Steve Wilson, Sharon Sorby; and Mikki Ravenscroft, Office Manager. SCA is a non-profit corporation providing environmental oversight and public information for the southern Selkirk Mountains of northern Idaho. Third-class postage paid at Priest River, Idaho. Permit No. 27. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to the address above.

Selkirk Conservation Alliance
P.O. Box 1809
Priest River, Idaho 83856

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 27
Priest River, ID