



# Sightlines

www.scawild.org

Spring 2021

Newsletter of the Selkirk Conservation Alliance

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## Welcome, Executive Director Anderson

**Executive Director Amy Anderson joined the SCA team this April.**

**Please welcome Amy as she shares her message with you.**

**H**ello!  
My name is Amy Anderson and I am more than a little ecstatic to be joining the Selkirk Conservation Alliance *team* working to "keep the wild in the Selkirk ecosystem"!

Let me tell you a little about myself and how I came to be a member of the SCA *team*! I was born and raised on a small working farm in south-eastern Iowa. In addition to corn fields our family farm contained meandering pastures and was bordered by dense woodlands with many clean flowing streams and lakes. These beautiful natural areas contained an abundance of wildlife both plant and animal that my brothers and I came to know and love as family.

I am blessed to be able to say that my early childhood was surrounded by wildlife, nature and water. I was taught to have a deep and profound love and respect for the creatures and systems that sustain us all. These early teachings

underpinned my desire to study ecology and conservation biology, wildlife biology and rangeland ecology in the Pacific Northwest, University of Idaho Moscow.

After graduating from University of Idaho in 2008 I began working for the Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT); Wildlife Monitoring and Evaluation Program (UWMEP). This work included working with The Coeur d'Alene Tribe, the Kalispell Tribe of Indians, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, the Spokane Tribe of Indians and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation collecting, documenting and analyzing, primary ecological data in pristine and altered habitat types to be used as base reference data for future reservation restoration purposes. Through this work with the Tribes I developed a love of and became very familiar with the flora, fauna and ecosystems of the Pacific Northwest.

In addition, I also developed a deeper understanding and respect for Tribal nations and



**SCA welcomes Executive Director Amy Anderson.**

the work the Tribes are doing (especially in the PNW) to protect and restore our precious natural resources and functioning ecosystems.

I was also privileged to work for the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's Natural Resources Departments, Environmental Programs Office as an Environmental Planner working on a spectrum of projects and programs, from establishing a Tribal facilities recycling program to developing a Coeur d'Alene Tribe Wetland

**WELCOME,**  
CONTINUED, PAGE 4

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*Sightlines* is the newsletter of the Selkirk Conservation Alliance (SCA), a non-profit corporation providing environmental oversight and public information for the Selkirk Mountains.

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- Jon Miller
- Stan Miller
- Jonathon Quinn-Hurst
- Paul Sieracki
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**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

**T**he year 2020 is behind us! With the New Year comes the blessings of Spring and many opportunities for a better 2021. Although “the unexpected” defined 2020, I did not expect the daunting task of serving as SCA President heralding this new year. It is a great privilege to assume a leadership role in this important environmental advocacy organization, but I do so with a gulp of trepidation.

I cannot fill Jim Bellatty’s presidential boots, and he cannot be thanked enough for the great job he has done for the SCA. In the absence of an executive director, he not only fulfilled those responsibilities, but was able to guide a strong volunteer, working Board while keeping SCA afloat and on task. Environmental advocacy is more than just publicly highlighting clear, cool deep Alpine Lake waters and the surrounding beauty.

Organizations like the SCA are always at risk of being swept away by a rogue wave while making their best effort to monitor environmental quality and its offenders. Jim managed to navigate the SCA safely through many a storm. His career in environmental quality and his never-ending energy and enthusiasm for the Priest Lake Basin cannot be replaced by any one of us. Thank You Jim! Think of us as you are boondocking in you RV in some remote warm location.

Fortunately, The SCA Board does not need to navigate the Environmental storms alone. Help is on the way! We are very pleased (ecstatic) to announce that we have hired a new Executive Director. Amy Anderson joined us in April. She has Bachelor of Science Degrees in Ecology, Conservation Biology and Wildlife Biology. She brings several years’ experience as Environmental Planner for the Coeur d’Alene Tribe and as the Environmental Pro-

grams Director for Kootenai Environmental Alliance. She has experience in Grant writing and management.

The decision to hire an Executive Director was very difficult for the Board of Directors. The need for someone of Amy’s caliber to enable continuity of the SCA was clear, but the feasibility of funding a full time professional was daunting. The Board felt so strongly about the importance of an Executive Director as well as associated fiduciary responsibility, that both retired and present Board members pooled personal donations for seed money to enable hiring Amy.

**Selkirk Conservation Alliance**

**Mission**

Engage the public in southern Selkirk resource and land management issues through cooperation, scientific inquiry, education and economic diversity.

**Vision**

The Selkirk Conservation Alliance is the leading and faithful advocate to all who live, love and benefit from Priest Lake and its surroundings. We are committed to understanding, supporting and protecting the environment and all living beings found here. We are dedicated to the educational programs and scientific research that support and maintain this rare and exceptional environment for future generations.

We are very optimistic that we will be able to grow our organization to fund an Executive Director in perpetuity, but we need help from the Membership. Membership dues and donations are crucial for covering overhead expenses. Please consider making an extra donation to the SCA earmarked “Executive Director expense.” Please also help us with a Membership drive by encouraging friends and neighbors to join the SCA!

We invite you to meet Amy at the Annual Membership Meeting on August 19, 2021

in Coolin. Having missed last year’s meeting because of Covid, we have some catching up to do. Details will follow, but it is promising to be a fun event. Thank you all for your support of the SCA and enjoy your *Sightlines*.

**Curt Wickre**, SCA Board President  
[sca@scawild.org](mailto:sca@scawild.org)

For more in-depth articles, photographs and links, go to our website [www.scawild.org](http://www.scawild.org)

# SCA Meetings 2021 - Save the Dates!

**D**uring this difficult time of Covid-19 restrictions, one positive aspect for the SCA Board has been using Zoom with an unexpected and welcome advantage of making meeting attendance more accessible for more of our SCA members.

Members have been and are always welcome but now it's especially easy to join regardless of where you are.

Before the meeting date, contact SCA office manager Robin Maloney at 208-448-1110 or maloney@scawild.org. You will need to provide your e-mail address so that Robin can send you the meeting invitation link.

## Calendar of Meetings 2021

**June 17**  
1 PM | Board meeting via Zoom

**August 19**  
4 PM | Annual Membership Celebasin\*  
*\*Tentatively planned for in-person.  
Details to follow via email.*

**October 21**  
1 PM | Board meeting via TBA

## Annual Meeting 2021

Mark your calendar and stay tuned for details!

August 19, Thursday  
4 PM | Board of Directors  
Open Meeting  
5 PM | Meet Executive Director  
Amy Anderson  
Coolin Community Center\*

*\*Covid Protocol Dependent*

Watch your email inbox for details. If you are not signed up for the SCA mailing list, or are unsure if you are on the list, please reach out to SCA Office Manager Robin Maloney at 208-448-1110 or maloney@scawild.org.

## Letters from SCA Members

**We love to hear from our members.**

**Send your letters, comments, thoughts, suggestions via USPS to the SCA office address, or via email at [sca@scawild.org](mailto:sca@scawild.org)**

**T**he Selkirks will always be in my heart and soul. I started coming to Priest Lake when I was 2, in 1958. I pray I can help keep it as intact as possible, so that my grandchildren can enjoy it in its same splendor as I did. It will take a lot of effort and a whole community to make that happen, as it always seems that disinterested or ill advised parties want to change that which made

it great and glorious in the first place. So please keep up the fight!

I have my hands full on other endeavors for the environment, primarily with PLCOA locally and National Parks Conservation Association nationally and Vital Ground for specific grizzly bear recovery projects, so SCA gets my treasure, not talent, at this point. But I am connected and value the work that you and Jim and the others are carrying on. It is way too often under appreciated, but so, so important. So don't lose faith!

Regards,  
*Matt Rudolf*, SCA Member/Supporter

## SCA Online

One of SCA's strategic objectives is to maintain an online presence and to attract or recruit the younger generation to become members and "faithful advocates to all who live, love and benefit from Priest Lake and its surroundings." Find SCA online in three places:

**SCA Web Page** [scawild.org](http://scawild.org)  
**Facebook** [facebook.com/SCAWILD](https://facebook.com/SCAWILD)  
**Instagram** [instagram.com/scawild](https://instagram.com/scawild)

Please let us know your thoughts on how we can improve our online presence and if you would like to volunteer to help SCA with this important task. Thank you!

**SELKIRK CONSERVATION ALLIANCE**  
**VOLUNTEERS WANTED**  
*That's you!*

- BOARD MEMBERS
- CLEAN WATER ADVOCATES
- HIGHWAY CLEANER-UPPERS
- NEW MEMBERS
- GRANT WRITERS
- CONTACT SCA**



# Meet Our Newest SCA Board Members

## Paul Sieracki

Paul Sieracki worked for the USFS as a wildlife biologist where his passion for environmentalism and public disclosure perhaps exceeded that of the Forest Service. This experience was instrumental in the founding of Bonners Ferry Forest Watch along with a professional consulting business.

Paul has a BS in zoology and an MS in Geospatial Analysis. His capstone project addressed the effects of climate change on Ancient Cedar and Hemlock stands in the Inland Temperate Rainforest where he received an award for academic achievement and creativity.

Paul has been a resident of the Selkirk Mountains since 1979 and has been an employee of SCA twice over. He now supports many conservation groups fighting ongoing efforts to log and road areas that should be restored to their native state.

Welcome, Paul!



## WELCOME, CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

Program Plan for the Coeur d'Alene Reservation.

Through my work with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe I also became very familiar with many of the state, federal and local/regional laws, regulations and protocols governing agencies responsible for protecting public land, water and air. I was responsible for reviewing and commenting on various county, state, Tribal and non-Tribal programs, plans, special uses, variances, permits, proposed activities, LUDC's, Comprehensive Plans, SEPA and NEPA compliance documents (EA's, EIS's, FONSI,s) etc. working (watchdogging) to ensure compliance with Tribal natural resource management plans as well as state and federal environmental laws.

I moved on from the Coeur d'Alene Tribe but continued fighting for public land, air, water and wildlife as the Environmental Programs Director for Kootenai Environmental Alliance (KEA) in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. As the Environmental Programs Director (and often times, the sole employee), I wore many, many hats for the organization. Some of these hats included: management of the Coeur d'Alene Lake Waterkeeper program overseeing and facilitating Waterkeeper educational outreach and

community engagement efforts in addition to the Waterkeeper citizen science water quality monitoring program.

I was the principal program developer, manager, fundraiser and grant writer for the organization researching, developing and managing all Kootenai Environmental Alliance projects and programs. This work also included extensive outreach, collaboration and cooperation with partnering entities, agencies and stakeholders which included state and federal agencies, local governments and municipalities, community members Tribal Governments, local youth/students, NGOs, business owners, school districts, clubs and local organizations and others.

I truly believe that environmental conservation and restoration is and must be a collective effort by all community members (and their respective families, businesses, organizations, agencies etc.). Only by working together can we tackle the immensity of the task before us, conserving and protecting land, air and water for generations to come.

I have lived in the Pacific Northwest for 23 years and am familiar with many of the environmental, social and political issues that plague the region's air,

water, land and wildlife. I am proud and honored to roll up my sleeves and get to work for this amazing organization that has been fighting diligently for natural resources conservation and protection in the southern Selkirks for the last 30 years!

I hope to work closely with the SCA Board and local community and put my skill set to work fighting to further the SCA mission to "engage the public in southern Selkirk resource and land management issues through cooperation, scientific inquiry, education and economic diversification" and to "keep the wild in the Selkirk ecosystem" for generations to come!

Sincerely,  
Amy Anderson

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*If you would like to say hello or have questions for Amy, please reach out to her at [anderson@scawild.org](mailto:anderson@scawild.org)*

# Meet Our Newest SCA Board Members

## Stan Miller

Stan Miller is a retired water resources professional and long-time Priest Lake “visitor.”

Stan entered the water resources arena relatively late in his career. After graduating from Central Washington State College (CWU) in the late 1960s, Stan taught high school math and science for six years before entering graduate school. After completing a Master’s Degree in Environmental Science at WSU (Water Quality option) in 1977, he began a 27-year career at Spokane County.

For that entire period, he worked on the regional program to protect the Spokane Valley--Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer. He headed what is now the County’s Water Resources program from 1983 through 2004 when he retired. In addition to the Aquifer Protection work, the Water Resources Program was lead agency for Watershed Planning for the Middle Spokane River (WRIA 55), the Little Spokane River (WRIA 56), and the Lower Spokane River (WRIA 54). All of these efforts involved developing cooperative programs among a number of state and local politi-

cal jurisdictions. The work on the Spokane Valley--Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer involved extensive coordination with the Panhandle Health District and the Coeur d’Alene office of the Idaho DEQ.

Stan’s association with Priest Lake began in the winter of 1972, when he and his wife Georgia became winter caretakers for a cabin belonging to extended family members on a state leased lot on Cavanaugh Bay. This winter work allowed them to visit the cabin often during the better (summer and fall) parts of the year. In 1985, they purchased the lease. Many summer weeks were devoted to time at the cabin with friends and relatives. In the 2018 state lease auction the Miller’s purchased the lot.

Given his training in limnology Stan became aware of the gradual deterioration in lake quality in Cavanaugh Bay. This first became obvious when algae began to appear on dock logs in the mid 1980s. In those early years Stan worked with Idaho DEQ water quality personnel on lake studies. As part of his work with water quality on the lake



Stan became an IdaH2O master water steward in 2012. For nearly a decade he has sampled Cavanaugh Bay near the family cabin and Cougar Creek just upstream from the mouth.

In addition to time boating and canoeing on the lake Stan, along with friends and family, have hiked and skied many miles of trails around the lake.

Though only associated with the Selkirk Conservation Alliance for a short time Stan’s interest in the lake’s future meshes well with the Alliance’s mission.

# Sxwuytn-Kaniksu Connections ‘Trail’ Project

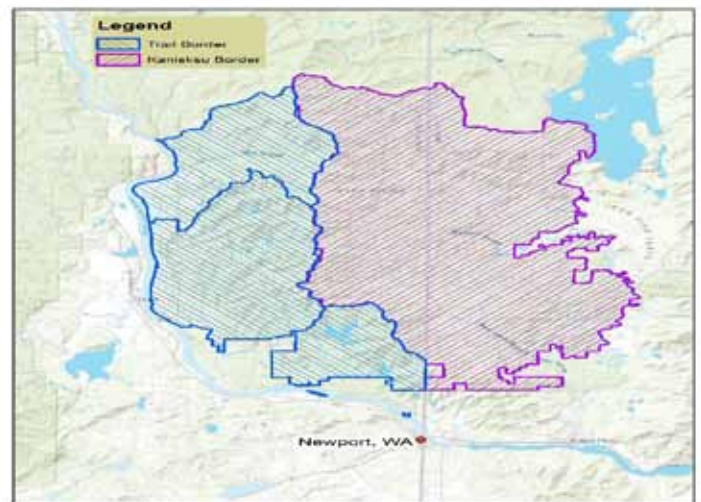
BY TRACY MORGAN, SCIENTIST VOLUNTEER

SCA wants its members and others to be aware of a vast tract of land straddling the Idaho and Washington border which will be ‘managed’ by the U.S. Forest Service, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

According to a news release, Sxwuytn (su-who-y-tin) is a Salish word meaning “Trail” or connections. The Trail Project is on the Colville National Forest’s (CNF) Newport-Sullivan Lake Ranger District in northeastern Washington’s Pend Oreille County, four miles north of Newport.

The project area consists of portions of five large watersheds covering approximately 90,700 acres. Land ownership within the project boundary is a mix of private, tribal, state, and federal. The CNF manages 46% (41,600 acres), private lands cover 41% (37,000 acres), WA DNR manages 9% (8,200 acres) and 4% of the project area is owned by the Kalispel Tribe of Indians. The WA Department of Fish & Wildlife manages the LeClerc Wildlife Area (<1%, 200 acres).

For more information, check out the following FAQ document online: [knrd.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2020/04/FAQs-about-the-Sxwuytn-Kaniksu-Connections-Trail-Project.pdf](https://knrd.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2020/04/FAQs-about-the-Sxwuytn-Kaniksu-Connections-Trail-Project.pdf)



Kaniksu and Trails Management Project Boundaries

# Report: SCA Finance Committee, Spring 2021

BY JON QUINN-HURST, SCA BOARD MEMBER, FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR

**The Selkirk Conservation Alliance budget continues to be monitored on a quarterly basis by the SCA Finance Committee. The committee includes Jon Quinn-Hurst, Jon Miller and Adam Kress.**

**T**he 2021 Budget is balanced and meets the expenses for projects and staffing in this budget year. The ongoing projects include support of the water quality sampling/testing at Priest Lake, water quality monitoring invasive aquatics in Kalispell Bay, and monitoring the tributaries on the East side of Priest Lake to assess the potential impact of logging on the streams.

To best serve the mission and vision of SCA, the Board has hired an Executive Director, Amy Anderson. Thanks to Barry Rosenberg, a founding member of the Selkirk Conservation Alliance and dedicated environmentalist, who took the initiative to reach out to past SCA board members. Past board members donated more than \$5,000 toward funding the position. Current SCA Board members donated more than \$8,000 to add to that effort. Thank you

to Rosemary and Bruce Yocum (stalwart members of SCA and former Board member) who donated \$5,000, making it possible to fund the position.

**We rely on member support and donations, including for the funding of our Executive Director position, so please keep SCA in mind as we continue to strive to Keep the Wild in the Selkirk Ecosystem.**

The position is currently fully funded for six months. The big challenge now is to raise the money to fund the next six months!

The Selkirk Conservation Alliance is THE environmental advocacy organiza-

tion of the Priest Lake basin with legal standing on environmental issues. There are challenges and opportunities on the horizon for the basin, and to meet these the Board of Directors has chosen to focus on increasing membership income and donations.

SCA is thankful to our dedicated members who support the goals and projects through membership and donations. The Selkirk Conservation Alliance Board sincerely requests that you talk with your friends and neighbors about the work of SCA and encourage them to join SCA to fund its work in monitoring and protecting the environment of the Priest Lake Basin. Donations in addition to memberships are always greatly appreciated!

In summary, we have a tight balanced budget that we are closely monitoring, and our goal is to continue to fund the research, education and advocacy work of the Selkirk Conservation Alliance. We rely on member support and donations, so please keep SCA in mind as we continue to strive to Keep the Wild in the Selkirk Ecosystem.

## Huckleberry Glacé Pie

SOLVEIG MILLER AND ANN FIEBING, NEE PAULSON

This pie once won first prize at the Idaho Huckleberry Festival. In addition to fact that it is amazingly yummy, the glacé pie uses fewer berries than a baked pie, which, in lean berry years, might be important.

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup fresh or frozen huckleberries, for making sauce
- $\frac{3}{4}$  - 1 cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water
- 3 Tbls. Cornstarch
- 2 cups fresh huckleberries
- 4 oz. cream cheese
- 2 Tbls. Powdered sugar
- Lemon zest (optional)

1. Use your favorite pre-baked pie crust.
2. Heat one cup berries with sugar in saucepan until they begin to pop. Crush them as they cook.
3. Add water mixed with cornstarch. Blend and stir until thickened. Boil 1 minute. Cool.
4. Meanwhile, cream together cream cheese, powdered sugar and lemon zest and spread on bottom of pre-baked pie crust. Add the fresh berries to the cooled berry puree. Fold all into crust and chill.
5. Serve with whipped cream if desired. Prepare yourself for a taste of Huckleberry Heaven!





# Stalking the Priest Lake Huckleberry

BY JON MILLER, SCA BOARD MEMBER

It was a pretty good year at the patch code-named “Shooting Range.” I’d tell you where it was, but then I’d have to kill you. We were introducing our good friends Hank and Linda to huckleberry picking and they were doing pretty well, for beginners. We’d found each a good bucket and a rope belt to secure it to their waist. We attached bells to their wrists, sprayed them with bug spray, instructed them on bear protocol, and encouraged each to be a “two-handed picker.” We’d been at it an hour or two and Solveig and I had about filled out buckets (I said it was a pretty good year, and we’d recently gone to smaller buckets...). We were all in our 50s, I think, but picking memories blur with age. It was hot, and we were beginning to feel that little twinge in the small of our backs that says, “We have enough for a pie, pancakes, and a batch of jam already,” and there was cold beer in the cooler in the car. Of course, I’d sent out a few quitting messages already, knowing that you usually had to drag Solveig out of a good patch. “Pickin’ toward the car,” I yelled. “OK, I just have to finish this bush,” she said, “They’re huckleberries here.”

Hank’s bucket was over half full, and if truth be told, the thought of that beer was enticing him to move a little too quickly toward the car. As many of you know, moving quickly and a bucket of huckleberries are words that don’t go together. And then we heard it, the slight scream and then a crash as he hit the ground twisting his knee in the process... So here is the jackpot Priest Lake huckleberry question of the day. What did Solveig and I yell almost simultaneously, but surely instinctively? A veteran picker in our family would know the answer for sure, “Did you spill your berries?” we shouted, followed closely by “Are you OK?” The order of the queries is telling, however.

I was introduced to huckleberry picking in 1969 by Solveig, then my girlfriend, and her family. It was probably up Abandon Creek, before it became over-

grown. I’d grown up in the Wenatchee Valley and picking fruit was in my blood. I think I passed the test, which was easier than many her brothers had for me. Every year since then, we’d check out the old patches, find some new ones, and bring in the berries. About now, we’d start wondering. *How was the snowpack. Did we have a late freeze? Are there enough bees to pollinate the blossoms?* And then, some time in mid-May or early June, usually on a walk, but possibly on a scouting mission, we’d see a tiny green berry, then another and another, and we’d know that we’d not be skunked this year. There were going to be berries again, and with them pies, pancakes, cobbles, and jam.

As huckleberries resist domestication, the only way to obtain them is in the wild. In Idaho, on State endowment lands, there are no restrictions on berry picking. Commercial picking is not allowed on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest, but on state land, the huckleberry is truly what economists call an open-access, common property resource. While we occasionally have to stay a step ahead or out of the way of commercial pickers, and cuss the use of picking “rakes,” the huckleberry is one of the few open-access common property resources that is not over-harvested. Unlike tuna, salmon, cod and grass on the open range, huckleberries will likely not become endangered from over-harvesting, even without regulation. The Idaho State Fruit is just too darn hard to pick.

While we hate to admit it, Solveig and I can see a future end to our picking days. Before long, our grandchildren will be bringing us a loaded branch to pick at the cabin, like we did for Solveig’s mother years ago. We hope it’s not too soon. We now choose our patches as much for ease of access as for quantity of berries. I’ve perfected a sit-and-slide picking method that’s easier on my back, although much harder on my pickin’ pants. It’s not just fingers that are



**Some huckleberry years are “bear” years, photo credit Solveig Miller**

purple now. Solveig uses a walking stick and chooses her routes more carefully. But another generation is taking over. Our daughter can out-pick me now, as hard as I try to win the contest. It often comes down to the last couple of cups at cleaning and bagging. She admitted to me a few years ago that when she was little, with her little bucket, she would crush some berries to make her fingers purple, then go watch her mother pick. Not now. We still write our names on the bags before they go into the freezer. Bragging rights still exist. I also note on the bag the date and location. It makes us smile years later when we remove the bag from the freezer and see “Helicopter Pad,” July 17, 2019. It could be my imagination, but it seems the season is getting earlier and earlier. Climate change?

Well, that’s my huckleberry story. It’s not unique by any stretch, not even the sit-and-slide. If you get a chance, send us an email with a huckleberry story. At SCA, we seek not just to protect the Priest Lake environment, but to celebrate it, as well. And there are few ways better to celebrate this environment than to go into the woods in July and August, and up high in September; There’s no better place than Priest Lake to stalk the wild huckleberry. Just remember, don’t spill your berries.

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*To provide a small additional incentive, check out the huckleberry glacé pie recipe on page 6.*

# Adopt a Priest Lake Stream

BY CURTIS WICKRE, SCA BOARD MEMBER

The Priest Lake Stream Monitoring Program has been initiated as a focused SCA project. The multiple reasons for the prioritization of this project were outlined in the fall, 2020 *Sightlines* but are important to review.

Most obviously, crystal clear, cool, voluminous creeks and streams fill the lake with crystal clear, cool water in which we love to recreate (except maybe the cool part!) Historically however, many of the lake's tributaries are too warm to meet the Clean Water Act's temperature standards. Elevated temperatures can adversely affect trout spawning and the health of aquatic species. Extensive logging is occurring along East Priest Lake (including Upper Priest) which increases the solar loading and allows warming of lake tributaries. Additionally, logging potentially increases the nutrient loading of streams as measured by Nitrogen and Phosphorus levels. Increased nutrients, especially associated with increased light penetration can lead to increased algae growth and decreased oxygen availability (eutrophication). Nutrient loading can be delayed by 2-6 years following logging emphasizing the importance of a prospective long term stream monitoring program. Most importantly, stream quality monitoring in the Priest Lake Basin has not been consistently or routinely completed.



Last July and again in September, we completed single point baseline stream data collection including temperature, acidity, Nitrogen and Phosphorus at 10 different sites in 8 East Priest Lake creeks from Caribou Creek in the North to Soldier Creek in the South. Meaningful temperature monitoring however, requires continuous temperature recording throughout seasonal variations. With the help of a grant from the Priest Lake Cabin Owner Association, we purchased continuous temperature sensor monitors called "Tidbits." In November, we were able to implant temperature monitors in 5 streams including Lion's Head, Two Mouth, Indian, Hunt and Soldier Creeks. The experience of mounting the hardware with epoxy at the bottom of cold creeks in November is a separate story!

And now - we wait patiently for science to "happen." The Tidbits measure temperature every 15 minutes, 7 days a week, for 2 continuous years. What could go wrong with that? We will check on the Tidbits in the Spring. Can we find them? Did the epoxy holding the hardware to the mounting cure in the cold water? What happened to the boulder? Why didn't they download or won't they upload? Most pragmatically, can we reach them safely without scuba gear and a dry suit during Spring runoff?! How hard is all this data to collate and evaluate?

Our goal is to monitor not just 5 streams but most of the major Creeks emptying into Priest Lake including West Side, East Side and Upper Priest. All that limits us is time and money (and patience).



**Jim Lea knee deep in Indian Creek; and, photo lower left, with Tidbit epoxied to a boulder**

Here is where our Adopt a Stream Program enters. Since we have begun this project, we have discovered that people have favorite streams, including Granite and Kalispell Creeks not yet included in our project; and how about Trapper and Caribou Creeks?

Now is your opportunity to Adopt-a-Stream. For a modest donation of \$250 to \$500 you can be part of the process. You can have your name attached to a submerged Tidbit only to be seen by a spawning salmonid in your favorite creek. You can wade your stream with SCA board members and volunteers. You can have your name published in *Sightlines*. You can learn to spell Phosphorus. You can get front row seating at the annual meeting to hear a presentation by our new Executive Director. Other incentives are likely to percolate through the bubbling creeks to clarify as this program is developed so be the first to jump feet first into your favorite Priest Lake Tributary!



# Rare Moonwort found on the Bog Creek Road

BY PAUL SIERACKI, SCA BOARD MEMBER

**D**uring a two-and-a-half-year study of the flora of the Selkirks, Harpo Faust, then a University of Idaho Biology student, found this rare moonwort on the Bog-Malcom Creek roadbed. It is now documented as the only known location of this species in Idaho.

*Botrychium hesperium* averages 12 cm high and is easily confused with other moonwort species. It is found in western US mountains, with populations ranging from one plant to groups of 50 to 100 individuals, but occurs mostly in small groups of four to 20 plants.

Moonworts require arbuscular mycorrhizae to survive. Arbuscular mycorrhizae are fungi that penetrate the root cells of plants and form arbuscules. There are several theories of how moonworts propagate; wind dispersal, dispersal by small mammals eating the spore-bearing fronds, and a possible pattern of downslope spore dispersal along watercourses. In general, moonworts require disturbances to germinate and require mycorrhizae to become mature.

The fate of this species in Idaho is now at risk, as the USFS and Border Patrol are trying to open the road to access a remote portion of the US-Canada border at Bog Creek. This plant occurs in the Pend Oreille County portion of

the Selkirks, where it is listed as State threatened, and USFS sensitive. The USFS is undecided as to the fate of these plants, one option is to “lift the grader blade” when opening the road near the plants, but this impacts the mycorrhizae that the species requires and exposes the population to additional disturbance including impacts from traffic, brush clearing and herbicide application.

Once touted as a biologically complete ecosystem, our Selkirk Mountains are losing plant and animal species due to the ongoing efforts of the USFS and IDL to road and log entire ecosystems, from dams on the Upper Columbia, blocking off salmon and possibly lampreys from assessing Sullivan Creek, from the historic loss of the white-headed woodpecker and recently the mountain caribou. The very low or possibly extirpated (locally ex-

ting) populations of fisher and Canada lynx along with the probable uplisting of white-bark pine to threatened status all contributing to the decline of Selkirk biodiversity.



## Thoroughfare Thoughts

“Travel by canoe is not a necessity, and will nevermore be the most efficient way to get from one region to another, or even from one lake to another anywhere. A canoe trip has become simply a rite of oneness with certain terrain, a diversion off the field, an art performed not because it is a necessity but because there is value in the art itself.”

*John McPhee, American writer (1931-)*



## A recent advocacy letter sent by SCA to the US Senate and Alliance for the Wild Rockies:

Senator Mike Crapo  
United States Senate: Idaho  
251 E. Front St., Suite 205  
Boise ID, 83702  
208-334-1776

Senator James E. Risch  
United States Senate: Idaho  
350 N. 9th St., Suite 302  
Boise, Idaho 83702  
208-342-7985

Mike Garrity  
Alliance for the Wild Rockies  
PO BOX 505  
Helena, MT 59624

April 22, 2021

RE: *Selkirk Conservation Alliance SUPPORT for H.R.3334 (1321) Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act sponsored by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12)*

**D**ear Honorable Idaho State Representatives Mr. Crapo Mr. Risch and Mr. Garrity,

In honor of Earth Day 2021 Selkirk Conservation Alliance (SCA) would like to formally announce our support for the introduction of the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (NREPA).

The Northern (wild) Rockies is the largest intact ecosystem in the lower 48 states and provides critical habitat to many threatened and endangered species of plants and animals. In addition to critical habitat this region encompasses some of the largest and last undeveloped watershed complexes left in the contiguous continental US. These systems ultimately supply much of the source water for some of our nation's largest drinking water systems; the Columbia River and Missouri River systems.

And, if clean water and intact habitats that support thousands of species weren't enough, the permanent preservation of the forested areas within this region represents one of our nation's last defenses for combatting climate

change. Modern scientific research emphasizes the importance of forests for carbon sequestration and the forests of the Pacific Northwest are among the largest stores of living carbon on the planet, and have a higher carbon density than almost any other forest type in the world. In addition, soil disturbance caused by logging has been determined to be a major contributor of greenhouse gasses in the Pacific Northwest (and globally). Research shows that old growth forests store far more carbon than younger stands. Logging older trees and replacing them with younger ones emits tremendous amounts of CO2 and creates a "carbon debt" that takes many decades or centuries to repay.

NREPA represents the only large scale, comprehensive approach for protecting not just threatened and endangered flora and fauna but large scale functioning systems that are critical for current and future human survival.

SCA has witnessed and fought against the profound and ongoing destruction and mismanagement of our regional natural resources for the past 34 years. Our community and members have seen firsthand the destruction short term thinking and planning can have on our precious and finite clean water, land and air.

We further urge you to consider the fact that this legislation would also promote job growth in Idaho and the PNW by creating jobs that would restore old roads and clear cuts. These green jobs have higher than average growth rates and represent a more sustainable economic base that is not subject to the "boom and bust" economic cycles of industries based on extracting resources from the land.

In addition to job growth, it is estimated that, this legislation would save taxpayers \$245 million over a 10-year period through the elimination of federally sub-



sided lumber harvests, mining and oil/gas production, and grazing allotments on federally owned land.

Of further benefit to Idahoans, the legislation will help ranchers and farmers by keeping water available downstream until later in the season when it is most needed and allow for historic uses such as hunting, fishing and firewood gathering.

The legislation has been introduced and discussed in Congress five times since 1993. It is imperative and long overdue that permanent protection be granted to this region NOW. Without protection from Congress this critical and precious landscape is subject to deforestation, pollution, and development and, over time, these critical functioning watershed and forest ecosystems would be irreparably damaged, fragmented and degraded and unable to support life.

Our public lands belong to all of us, and it is our/YOUR duty to protect our nations national heritage, the old-growth forests, snow-capped mountains, and freshwater rivers and lakes of this country.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Anderson  
Executive Director  
Selkirk Conservation Alliance  
[anderson@scawild.org](mailto:anderson@scawild.org)  
[scawild.org](http://scawild.org)



# How to Protect Water Quality during Floods

BY AMY ANDERSON, SCA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**F**loodwaters may contain harmful bacteria, hazardous materials, and other toxins and that can have disastrous impacts on public health and the environment, particularly water quality.

Spring flooding is especially common in Bonner County and many properties along Bonner County's numerous lakes, rivers and streams include areas located within special flood hazard areas ("floodplains"). According to the Idaho Office of Emergency Management (IOEM) Bonner County experienced on average 16-20 "Major Flooding Events" between 2012 and 2017, the fourth highest in the state.

Most flooding occurs along natural stream or river channels and the extent of flooding depends on many factors including, the depth of winter snowpack, spring weather patterns, watershed and stream gradients, watershed vegetation in uplands and lowlands, and the natural and artificial flood storage areas.

The land along a stream or river that is identified as being susceptible to flooding is called the floodway. The communities of our region are especially vulnerable to the flooding of the many rivers, lakes, and creeks in the area due to snowmelt, rain, or rain on snow events combined with steep mountain slopes. The steep, mountainous terrain creates flood-prone environments, and development is often confined to areas adjacent to stream channels.

Read on for information on common threats to water quality during a flood and guidance on how to protect our regions water quality before, during, and after a flood event.

## Hazardous Materials

A common problem during, and after a flood, is the displacement and leakage of tanks and other containers holding hazardous materials (i.e. radioactive, flammable, explosive, corrosive, toxic, or allergenic). To minimize water qual-

ity contamination from these types of container leaks, follow these precautions: Store drums and smaller containers in areas that are not susceptible to rising and receding flood waters and contain in fenced areas, cabinets, or storerooms. Clearly identify and label contents of containers, especially when materials are not in original containers. Make sure containment vaults for underground storage tanks have been engineered properly to prevent tanks from floating out of the ground if contents are lighter than water.

## Wastewater and Septic Systems

The spread of harmful bacteria and other contaminants can also occur during a flood when wastewater and septic systems become overloaded and toxins enter drinking water wells and groundwater. To minimize and prepare for water quality contamination from wastewater and septic systems, follow these tips:

- Identify at what water level your system can become compromised and prepare an emergency response plan.
- Do not pump your tank when the drain field is flooded or over saturated.
- Do not use the sewage system until water in the soil absorption field is

lower than the water level around the house.

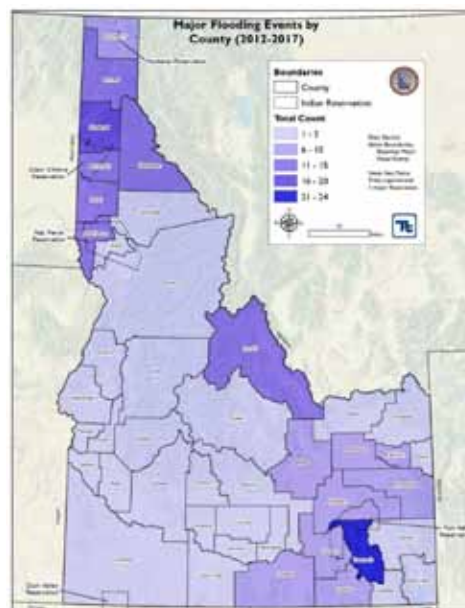
- Have your septic tank professionally inspected and serviced (every 3-5 years) if you suspect damage. If the soil absorption field is clogged, a new system may have to be installed or the wastewater diverted to a replacement drain field.

## Drinking Water

Floodwaters that inundate an area may contaminate drinking water wells and systems. If your private well is flooded, assume the water in your home is contaminated. Do not use contaminated water for any household use. Before a flood, precautionary measures to protect and prevent floodwater entry into the water system include sealing pipes, distribution lines, or other openings connected with your drinking water system. Have your well tested for bacteria and other contaminants before returning it to service.

Through planning and education, community members, homeowners and businesses can help minimize the negative impacts flooding can have on human health and the environment and we can all help to reduce flood-related threats to water quality.

## FEMA Major Flooding Events by County, Idaho 2012-2017



For more information on

- **FEMA floodplain maps:** [www.fema.gov/locations](http://www.fema.gov/locations)
- **FEMA Emergency Management:** [idahoofficeofemergencymanagement.wordpress.com/2018/05/30/chapter-3-2-risk-assessment-flood/](http://idahoofficeofemergencymanagement.wordpress.com/2018/05/30/chapter-3-2-risk-assessment-flood/)
- **Protecting wells:** [www.epa.gov/privatewells/protect-your-homes-water#what](http://www.epa.gov/privatewells/protect-your-homes-water#what)
- **CDA Flood protection info:** [www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/floodsafety.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fdisasters%2Ffloods%2Fcleanupwater.html](http://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/floodsafety.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fdisasters%2Ffloods%2Fcleanupwater.html)
- **EPA Flood preparedness:** [www.epa.gov/natural-disasters/flooding](http://www.epa.gov/natural-disasters/flooding)
- **Idaho Department of Water Resources, State Water Plan:** [idwr.idaho.gov/IWRB/water-planning/state-water-plan.html](http://idwr.idaho.gov/IWRB/water-planning/state-water-plan.html)



# Profile: SCA Member Mary Rutherford Member for 33 Years, and Counting!

BY ELEANOR HUNGATE JONES, SCA BOARD MEMBER, VICE PRESIDENT



Help us with a member drive—by helping drive up member numbers

It's as easy as 1-2 and not even 3.

1. **Encourage friends and families and regular visitors** of the lake to join SCA. Membership dollars are the bread and butter of SCA's work.
2. **Keep your membership current** with SCA. It makes a difference!

**A**s you look at these spectacular photos, perhaps you are reminded of the greeting cards featuring the Selkirks that have been on sale these past few years. The credit for these photos—and greeting cards—goes to Mary Rutherford, a summer lake resident and long-time member of SCA.

Mary remembers vividly her first Priest Lake experience in the mid-1950s. The drive with her parents, Gordon and Thelma, and her brothers, then the launch from Granite Creek as the road was not yet completed and motoring North to stay with friends at Beaver Creek. She remembers the swimming, hiking, racing through the sand, beach campfires and, as a five-year-old, she loved it all. Actually, the whole family felt the same way! Her parents purchased beach front property, her father and brothers Denney and Scott built the cabin and, from that first Priest Lake introduction, summers at the Lake were on.

As Mary relates her early Selkirk experiences, it's best described as "climb every mountain!" She felt at great deal of freedom with all the 'camp kids' as they hiked the trails and explored off trail as well! And, not once were they lost.



Now retired after 32 years of classroom teaching, Mary's summers are extended as she shares the summer days, and sometimes exciting storms, with family and friends. The cabin's lake front offers relaxing moments after a refreshing swim and how it's probably time to think about prepping the nachos soon to be enjoyed on the beach.

Another perfect day could start with an early morning kayak trip up the Thoroughfare—a time of tranquility with photos opps that might include spotting a turtle sunning on a log or a moose swimming from one side to the other. Or perhaps the plan could be an excursion to find the perfect 'fill the bucket' huckleberry patch.



And, it's these experiences that Mary relates to as the importance of being an SCA member for the past 33 years. She knows that she's supporting an organization with "people who care about the Selkirks, who want to take care of it and value keeping the wild." Thank you, Mary—here's to many more wonderful and memorable lake summers!