

# SIGHTLINES

A PUBLICATION OF

SELKIRK CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

EST. 1986

Spring 2026



OUR MISSION: ENGAGE THE PUBLIC IN SOUTHERN SELKIRK RESOURCE  
AND LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES THROUGH COOPERATION,  
SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION.

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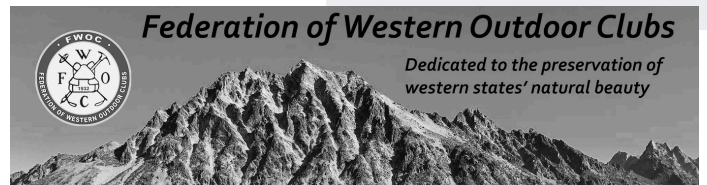
**Amy Anderson**  
Executive Director

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SCA would like to recognize the people and organizations that support our work!

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- Beaver Creek Camp Association!**
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2026 is a landmark year for the Selkirk Conservation Alliance as it is the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the organization. I have found anniversaries a time for reflection and celebration.

Looking back, we are grateful for the work of the founding members, who laid the groundwork for a successful 40 years of advocacy. We are thankful for the loyal members and volunteers who have done the 'boots on the ground' work to establish SCA as a leading organization with legal standing in the Selkirk Basin. We are grateful for the leadership of past president, Jim Lea, who is a tough act to follow. We are standing on the shoulders of giants!

Looking forward, the SCA Board is laying the path for continued advocacy and action by updating the Strategic Plan, guiding our pillar programs through 2030. The Environmental Education Program, Environmental Advocacy, and Scientific Research will continue to do the work to further the protection of waters of the Selkirk Basin.

Highlighting our partnerships with other organizations and agencies in fulfilling the mission of SCA, we are shining a light on an important ally in this issue of Sightlines. Project 7B works to educate, inform, and advocate on zoning and land planning issues in Bonner County. I urge you to check out their web site, become a member of Project 7B, and get informed about planning issues in Bonner County.

Celebrating the good work of our members and volunteers is the fun part, and the SCA "Fun-raising Committee" is planning a great CeleBasin Membership Get Together July 23 at the Tanglefoot Hangar in Cavanaugh Bay. There will be great food and music at an iconic setting. Get your friends and neighbors to join SCA so they can join the party!

All the information for this event is in the following pages of this newsletter and at this link: <https://scawild.org/celebasin/>.

The SCA Board of Directors are very grateful for your support and look forward to meeting you at the Celebasin. Please contact me if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions.

JON QUINN HURST, SCA PRESIDENT  
JQUINNHURST@GMAIL.COM



# Outgoing President's Message

This year 2026 will mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SCA, founded as the Selkirk Priest Basin Association that many years ago. Our work is never done since year after year Priest Lake and Priest River remain under siege by those who would threaten the water, the forests and the scenic beauty that is the Priest Basin.

SCA continues to support its three primary goals of education, scientific research and community advocacy. We continue to regularly check water and stream chemistry together with physical measures such as clarity and temperature.

Our executive director, Amy has multiple educational interactions with school children in Bonner & Boundary County's as well as the Kalispel Tribe. Amy remains vigilant, ensuring that Bonner County does not sneak through a rezoning plan that would increase the density of housing around the lake. Every month she submits records requests to ACOE & Bonner County to keep abreast of the latest attempt to build on wetlands or increase the number of small parcels with septic tanks.

We have a great working relationship with IDEQ and the Tribe. This year (thanks to SCA pressure) DEQ is proposing to begin level tier III testing on Priest Lake with the goal of submitting Priest Lake as an ORW (Outstanding Resource Water). This is a program sponsored by EPA that would provide the highest level of Clean Water Act protections for the lake if enacted by the legislature. Ironically this has been attempted before in the early 1990's (see accompanying article in this issue).

The ORW designation would put Priest in the company of Lake Tahoe, Crater Lake and other world class waters in the US. The benefits would not only preserve Priest Lake water quality and fishery but would provide economic benefits as has been seen elsewhere where this designation was granted. This will be a multi-year process that will require community and political support so we will have to remain patient. But it will be worth it in the end if we can finally accomplish this goal.

In closing, I would be remiss were I not to engage in a little begging. When the tax law changed a few years ago, increasing the larger standard deduction, most of us chose this option rather than itemizing. This has meant for small non-profit organizations like ours that donations have decreased. Fortunately, this year a new deduction has become available. Called variously the "above-the-line charitable deduction for non-itemizers" or the "universal charitable deduction", this allows a married couple filing jointly to deduct up to \$2000 to qualified non-profits like SCA. You don't have to give us the entire amount.

Finally, we hope to see you once again at the annual "CeleBasin" on July 23<sup>rd</sup> to be held at the Tanglefoot Hangar seaplane base on Cavanaugh Bay.

DR. JIM LEA, OUTGOING SCA PRESIDENT

## Update on SCA 2026 CeleBasin

The SCA membership CeleBasin event is scheduled for **July 23<sup>rd</sup>** from 4:30 to 7pm at the Tanglefoot Hangar (100 Waterbird Landing, Coolin). **All SCA members "in good standing" (folks who have renewed their memberships/donations since October 1, 2025) are invited to attend free of charge.**

PLEASE VISIT THE SCA WEBSITE AND RSVP ASAP or email Amy at [anderson@scawild](mailto:anderson@scawild) to RSVP!

SCA is offering limited VIP tables for up to 8 of your besties for \$1,000. This includes food, two bottles of wine, a special dessert for your table & seating close to the music!

Tickets for non-members and VIP tables can be purchased from the SCA website.

<https://scawild.org/celebasin/>

We are looking forward to a legendary CeleBasin with you all in July!



# Blast from the past remembering the very first CeleBasin 9-9-1990!



**All For One: CeleBasin celebrants lined up for a group photo at the 9-9-1990 event at Elkins Resort on Priest Lake.**

As Selkirk Conservation Alliance celebrates our 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, we want to look back to our original seeds that would become grassroots. Because, we understand that the further backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see! Thank you to the many wonderful people that came before us and kept this longstanding environmental nonprofit alive.

The following is from a 1990 Sightlines article about the event.

**The September 9<sup>th</sup> Selkirk Priest Basin Association (SPBA) was truly a “good time for a good cause”! Cross the Priest Basin with SPBA’s first annual celebration, and what do you get? A “CeleBasin,” that’s what.**

**And the SPBA’s first CeleBasin, held September 9<sup>th</sup> at Elkins Resort on Priest Lake was a rousing good time that raised a little more than \$3,100 for the group. SPBA Chairman Barry Rosenberg called the CeleBasin “an unqualified success.”**

The CeleBasin followed the SPBA annual meeting September 8<sup>th</sup> at Coolin, which included election of directors and an annual report on association activities.

Re-elected to the board of directors were; Rosenberg, of Priest River, Dave Boswell of Spokane, Bruce Brockway of Priest River, Kelly Corbin of Spokane, John Crane of Pullman, Washington, Bill Egolf of Priest River, Jules Gindraux of Coolin, David Hunt of Coeur d’Alene and Gordon West of Priest River.

**At the annual meeting Rosenberg reported that SPBA this summer added its first staff members; Chris Bessler, as part time executive director, Claude Morris as fundraising consultant, and Ed & Linda Sharman as public relations consultants. Rosenberg said the addition of the new staff “demonstrates the permanence of our organization.”**

**Some 200 people attended the CeleBasin, which featured music by Tammy and Mike Wagoner and Aquila Rose, a silent auction, door prizes and a picnic.**

**Big winner of the day was Brian Miller of Walla Walla, Washington who won the doorprize of a weekend at Elkins Resort and \$100. A fishing excursion with Priest Lake guide Peggy Mehs went to Kevin Peterson of Green Acres, Washington.**

**Rosenberg said the CeleBasin is now slated as an annual event and will return “bigger and better” next year as an event to celebrate the Priest Basin.**

**Please visit the SCA website  
at [www.scawild.org](http://www.scawild.org) to  
RSVP for the 2026  
CeleBasin!**

# Why SCA's Environmental Education Program Work is SO Very Important!

## Nature disconnectedness at the HEART of environmental crisis!

BY: AMY ANDERSON

A study recently published in Nature Magazine identified "nature disconnectedness" as being at the root cause, the very heart of, the severe environmental crisis and mass species extinctions we all face today.

That is, youth and adults not getting outside, living in more and more urbanized areas, not connecting with and developing a respect and love for the living world around us. Sadly, the vast majority of our youth think being in nature is the park or their school play yard! True, long term conservation is rooted in *love* for nature.

According to a recently published, decades long study by the World Wildlife Federation (WWF) species are declining/have declined on this planet in the last several decades by a whopping 73%.

"Nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history ... and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating," according to a global assessment report from the UN's Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). "The health of ecosystems on which we and all other species depend is deteriorating more rapidly than ever. We are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide."

Enshrined in the SCA Mission, and one of our three "Pillar" programs is; Environmental Education.

SCA is working to reverse this "nature disconnectedness" locally through our "Living Classrooms" program. The purpose of SCA's "Living Classrooms" outdoor education program is to provide much needed supplementary science based environmental education to our local youth. Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) education and environmental education in Idaho is severely lacking and FREE, OUTDOOR, hands-on STEM based learning experiences are next to none in rural north Idaho.

SCA's "Living Classroom" program works to provide low income & Tribal youth in our area with hands on, outdoor environmental educational experiences outside of their classrooms.

“SCA's activities get students out in the woods, touching, smelling, seeing hearing and engaging all of the senses - multisensory learning, rather than passively reading a book or attending an indoor, seated lecture. Students are immersed in the "Living Classrooms" around them.”



SCA's "Living-Classroom" field trips get local students, outdoors learning principles and concepts of natural resources protection, conservation biology, natural sciences, ecology, climate change, water quality protection and more with regional scientists and natural resources professionals.

The advantage of outdoors, hands-on environmental education and specifically, for the "Living Classroom" field trips is students are taking a physically active role in the learning process. SCA's activities get students out in the woods, touching, smelling, seeing hearing and engaging all of the senses - multisensory learning, rather than passively reading a book or attending an indoor, seated lecture. Students are immersed in the "Living Classrooms" around them. Decades of research has proven that youth (and many adults) tend to thrive in these tactile, multisensory learning situations and retain information at elevated percentages as compared to sedentary, indoor learning.



Some of these groups include; the Kalispel Tribe, Panhandle Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Idaho Department of Fish & Game, Lake Pend Oreille Master Naturalists, Kootenai Environmental Alliance, Idaho Department of Lands, Army Corps, US Forest Service, Native plant societies and the University of Idaho.

All stations are taught by volunteer agency professionals passionate about their fields of study which include; Wildlife Biology, Conservation Biology, Climate Science, Hydrology, Limnology, Entomology, Botany, Fire Science, Fisheries Biology and MORE! We seek to introduce and acquaint our local youth to the spectrum of potential future career opportunities as STEM based environmental professionals. This program exposes students to advanced topics in the fields of wildlife science, watershed and natural resources management/science, climate change, conservation (and more) and helps to bridge the gap between education and real world application of knowledge.

So what are the “Living Classrooms”?

Students are bussed to amazing sites that have great habitat features that we highlight and focus our teachings on like rivers, lakes and wetlands. Students rotate through 4-5 primary stations collecting real time data on things like species abundance, water temperature & pH, feeling, touching smelling, listening and learning to love the living world that they are a part of.

Stations have included; Native fisheries, Water science/water quality, Wonderful wetlands, Watershed/pollutants, Animal tracks, Bear ecology & awareness, Fire science and management, Native species plant and tree identification, “The Incredible Journey”/Water cycle, Learning and loving our streams/Stream ecology, Aquatic insect identification and ecology, Native canoes, Nature trekking, Water safety AND a Nature poetry station!

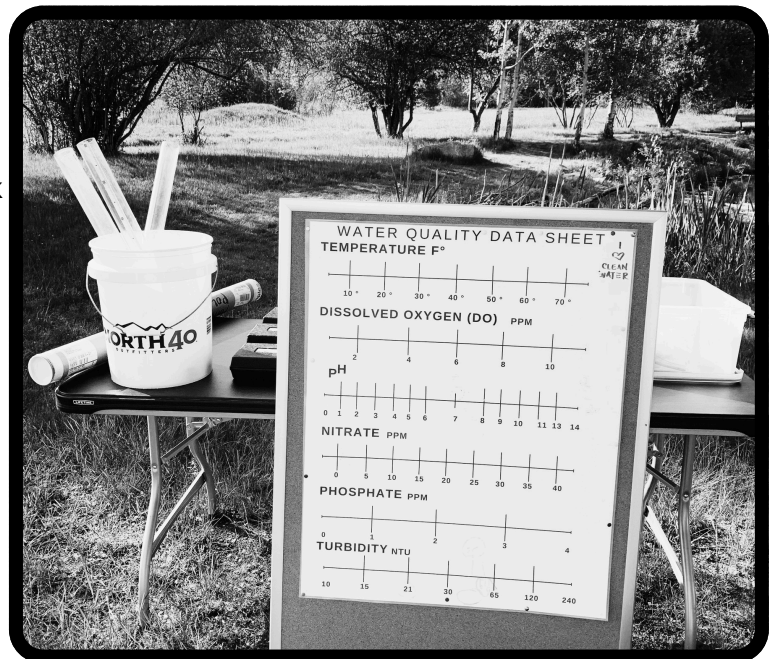
One of the community’s *favorite* annual “Living Classroom” field trips takes place at Trestle Creek in the fall when the Bull Trout and Kokanee salmon are spawning. Kids can read in a book all day long about salmon but actually witnessing living salmon spawning in their natal streams is a life changing experience for many students!

The folks leading the charge at SCA have always understood that one of the best ways we can work to protect our local environment for the long term is to educate both young and old!

SCA is proud to collaborate with many regional natural resources management agencies and professionals to bring this amazing outdoor education to our local students.

It is often said that, *if you cannot see it you cannot be it*. Our program shows students the many possible career fields in STEM and environmental sciences available to them and they get to see first-hand just how cool the work these environmental & natural science professionals do every day is! We are educating and inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards – this includes our WOMEN leaders!

The need for outdoor, science based, environmental education for students in Idaho is critical. In Idaho, during the 2018- 2019 legislative sessions, the Idaho House Education Committee removed six sections from science standards .....



on topics such as climate change, biodiversity, renewable energy and human impacts on earth systems. Further, they removed all supporting content across all standards, which is essential for guiding students and teachers. By removing this content from the legally defined performance standards, teaching on a range of environmental subjects becomes merely optional.

Without a legal obligation to include these subjects, overburdened teachers are far less likely to present environmental science related subjects. In addition, for the last five years, Idaho was ranked at the bottom or next to the bottom in the nation by Education Week for metrics such as; per-pupil spending & the percentage of taxable resources a state spends on education. Sadly, Idaho's per-pupil spending perennially ranks near the bottom of national rankings.

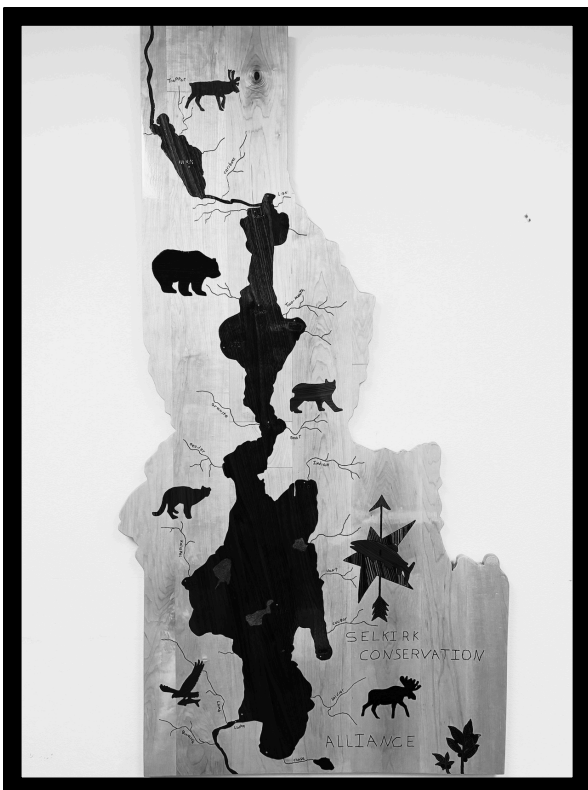
At a March 2024 expert's forum on Idaho's STEM future, five panelists discussed a wide range of topics from gender gap challenges to recruitment and retention within their professions. They also discussed the need for changes in the classroom to integrate STEM across subjects and keep kids, especially girls, interested as they progress through their educations.

**In 2025 SCA's Education Program served an estimated 2,720 students, teachers, parents and community members and a whopping 23 schools and student groups!**

SCA's Environmental Education program also has projects that seek to provide environmental education to our local adult community & to that end we give many talks & presentations, participate at local events, fairs and other raising awareness, involving and engaging the people of our region in collective stewardship of the systems and species that support and sustain us all.



**“In the end, we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we are taught.” - Baba Dioum, 1968 IUCN**



## **A GIFT OF A LIFETIME THANK YOU BRUCE YOCUM!**

Long time members Bruce and Rosemary Yocum recently donated this five-foot-tall wooden HANDMADE wall plaque of Priest Lake with all of SCA's Priest Lake and Streams Citizen Science Water Quality Monitoring sites engraved on it. Bruce made this extraordinary gift by hand and recently donated it to SCA and hung it in the SCA office in Priest River. We are overwhelmed by the kind gesture and cannot thank Bruce and Rosemary enough!

Bruce and Rosemary are long time members of SCA that have donated many hours to helping SCA with our water quality monitoring work, bookkeeping, HWY57 clean-ups and SO MUCH MORE. We consider the Yocum's to be SCA family and are so proud and honored to have their support! THANK YOU ROSEMARY & BRUCE!



# An Epic Huckleberry Year can Overshadow Many Woes



BY: JON MILLER

I try to avoid self-pity as much as I can. Besides, if you are lucky enough to spend much of the summer at Priest Lake, like Solveig and I do, no one will take your complaints seriously anyway.

But sometimes it's easy to become discouraged when we see threatened wetlands, rogue anti-environment Bonner County Commissions, relentless eastside logging, inappropriate snowmobiling, and relentless construction in the neighborhood.

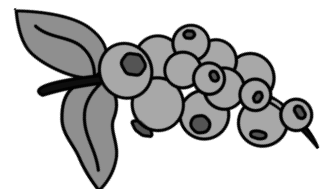
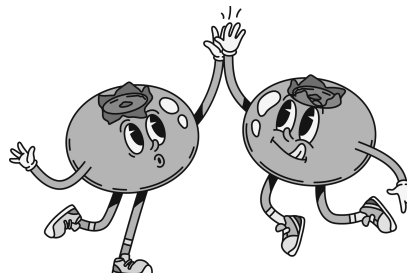
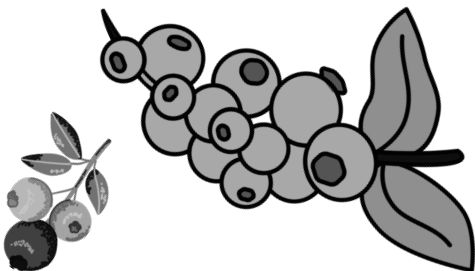
Three new homes (They're not cabins anymore.) were built near us in the last two years, along with two big remodel projects. One day I counted 16 construction vehicles on our road. I'll spare you the details of our Lake trifecta (no sewer, water, or electricity), and rapidly rising homeowner association fees. I guess it's just the normal negative aspects of the Lake Life.

But, as country singer Randy Travis once sang, "On the other hand..." I've been picking huckleberries at Priest Lake for over 55 years, and Solveig even longer. We knew 2025 was going to be a good year when we scouted our favorite patches in May and June. I sent out photo-text alerts to family members with the forecast.



We started at lake-level on July 3<sup>rd</sup> and worked our way higher and higher until August 20<sup>th</sup>, when aging bodies and maxed-out freezer capacity said that's enough; over 11 gallons. Other extended family members picked much more. In July and August, our bodies are purple. It's in our blood. At our last picking, after numerous timely rains, the bushes were so laden with clusters of big berries that the branches were often lying on the ground. I'd lie down with them, a new old-guy picking technique.

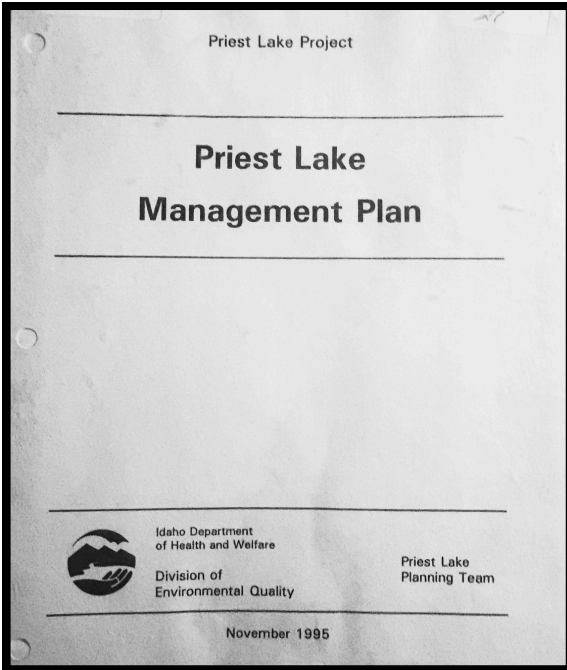
So, last year was not the year of environmental threats, construction dust, traffic, and noise, of windstorms and power outages, of sewer and water problems, of nasty special HOA assessments, and boat problems. No, in our family, 2025 will be remembered as an epic year, the best Priest Lake huckleberry year ever!



CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

# The mystery of the VANISHING Priest Lake Management Plan (PLMP)

BY: DR. JIM LEA



In 1989 the Environmental Protection Agency instituted a program to protect streams and/or lakes that have outstanding qualities such as water purity, cultural significance, or scenic beauty. Think of Lake Tahoe or Crater Lake. This designation came to be known as the Outstanding Resource Water (ORW), clearly a phrase only a bureaucrat could love since any native speaker of English would say outstanding water resource.

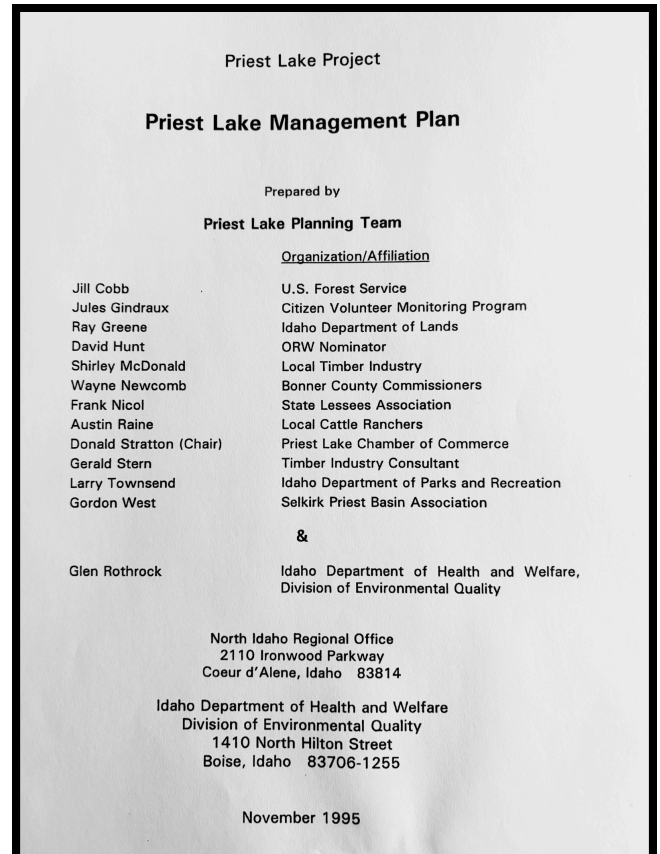
In any event, in 1990 David Hunt, an elementary music teacher in Coeur d'Alene who unsuccessfully (though not on his part) taught my daughter cello, nominated Priest Lake for ORW designation. This was presented to Idaho Division of Water Quality for consideration. The idea was met with significant opposition from the Idaho forest products industry for fear that the feds might interfere with their logging operations. As an alternative the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) proposed a state sponsored program which came to be known as the Priest Lake Management Plan (PLMP).

In 1991 HB 319 was enacted by the legislature and codified as 35-105 (3)(p). This directed funds to IDEQ to do a comprehensive study of Priest Lake and tributaries measuring chemical, physical and biological properties to assess the water quality. Also a 12-member committee of stakeholders was selected to identify the long-term measures that would preserve the lake and watershed water quality. Members included representatives from USFS, IDL, Priest Lake Chamber of Commerce, agriculture, property owners, Selkirk Priest Basin Alliance (now known as the Selkirk Conservation Alliance) and others.

This group collectively spent hundreds of hours over two years to produce the Priest Lake Management Plan. This comprehensive, gold star management plan contained management action items for eight of the top threats to Priest Lake water quality (Timberland and Associated Roads, Public & Private Residential Roads, Stormwater and Construction/Development, Wastewater Treatment, Motorized Watercraft, Recreation, Agriculture & Livestock, Hazardous Materials & Underground Storage Tanks & Above Ground Storage Tanks AND PLMP Implementation).

The PLMP called for IDEQ to hire a project manager to appoint a steering committee to oversee the prioritized initiatives outlined in the PLMP. Specific action items for implementation were to be developed by the project manager and committee in Annual Work Plans.

In 1996 HB 807 was adopted by the legislature and signed by Governor Phil Batt. **The entire PLMP document was incorporated into law by reference.** Money was procured to fund 1 FTE to implement the PLMP amounting to \$160000 annually.



What occurred thereafter is lost in the murk of time. What we can ascertain is that water quality testing was still accomplished for several years. However, the steering committee evidently was never appointed and most of the initiatives of the PLMP were not addressed. In 2000 SB 1426 created the Department of Environmental Quality elevating what was a division of Health and Welfare to the status of an executive branch department. As part of the bill the code 35 105 (3) (p) was deleted. In 2001 funding for the PLMP was lost thereby killing the program. How this happened is not at all clear. Session law HB 807 from 1996 was never repealed as far as we can determine.

Fast forward to 2026 and, mirabile dictu, IDEQ (thanks to pressure from SCA) is proposing to do Tier III water testing at Priest starting this year to determine if the lake can be nominated for the ORW status. This process will unfold over several years and will need to be enacted into law by the Idaho legislature.

**YOU CAN FIND THE COMPLETE 1996 PRIEST LAKE MANAGEMENT PLAN HERE:**

**[HTTPS://DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM/FILE/D/15VFBLyXLBvGR7\\_2GWrs8SPVAXMozQTNL/VIEW?USP=SHARING](https://drive.google.com/file/d/15VFBLyXLBvGR7_2GWrs8SPVAXMozQTNL/view?usp=sharing)**

This will take considerable community and political support. The ORW designation would be the surest way of preserving Priest Lake from degradation for the long term.

It will not prevent logging. Where it has been implemented across the country the ORW has enhanced tourism and the tourism-related economy. It has increased property values and the tax base. It has prevented point source pollution, which is something we all want to avoid. We envision that a committee very much like the one from 1992 could be reassembled to revise and update the PLMP for 2026. SCA is hopeful and will be advocating for this to be done as part of the Watershed Advisory Group which is being re-initiated by IDEQ. These are exciting times. Stay tuned to this station.

SCA has reached out to our Attorney friends at; Center for Biological Diversity, Advocates for the West and WildEarth Guardians to investigate the current status of the PLMP and discover with certainty if it is still active session law.

## **WORKING TO PROTECT AND CONSERVE THE LAST 300 NORTH AMERICAN WOLVERINE'S IN THE LOWER 48!**

**SCA AND ALLIES FIGHT TO  
PROTECT THE CRITICAL HABITAT  
THREATENED WOLVERINES  
NEED JUST TO KEEP ON  
EXISTING IN THE LOWER 48!**

BY: AMY ANDERSON

In October 2025, Selkirk Conservation Alliance, WildEarth Guardians, Friends of the Clearwater & Inland Empire Task Force with the stellar aid of the Western Environmental Law Center submitted a 60-day Notice of Intent (NOI) to sue the U.S Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over the agencies' Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation on how the Kaniksu Over Snow Vehicle Use Designation Project may affect the Threatened wolverine (*Gulo gulo luscus*).



Our attorney friends from WELC and WEG had many, many extreme hurdles they had to navigate to bring what we believe are the best, most winnable claims forth in this Notice of Intent (NOI) to sue the USFS. This includes some recent National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) rulings that were not in our favor, the repealing, rescinding and or revising of the Roadless Rule as well as the yet to be unveiled changes to the definition of "Harm" within the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Some notables with this NOI is that it is challenging the Biological Opinion (BI-OP) that the feds recently released on the Wolverine. This NOI is not challenging the Kaniksu Over Snow Travel Plan recommendations, just the BI-OP for the Wolverine within the management area.

The quick and dirty of the BI-OP claims center around the agency only focusing on maternal denning habitat and only females with kits. This narrow focus also provides for a very narrow time frame for which the agency needs to manage these areas. The BI-OP excludes all impacts to wolverine primary habitat. The WELC & WEG attorneys think they can successfully challenge this.

The feds are bound by a legal standard in which they MUST APPLY the best available science and A LOT of great emerging science is coming out of the Selkirk's and Idaho! New studies about the impacts of climate change and recreation on wolverine and other T& E species are very much in our favor. These are the two biggest threats to our snow loving T&E species.

Further, the team is working with some of the best wolverine experts/consultants around; Jeff Copelan, Rick Yates, & Kimberly Heinemeyer!

This case and decision will be very important for future conservation efforts and set an important precedent, the KEY is getting the science right! As detailed in the full NOI (see below link) the Service's biological opinion and related incidental take statement ("ITS") for the Kaniksu project are arbitrary, fail to utilize the best available science, and violate the ESA. The Forest Service's reliance on a faulty biological opinion and ITS also violates the ESA.

**Read FULL NOI HERE**  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cwOw\\_M5SamA7thy0TqvDN38Fdj-OY\\_Ka/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cwOw_M5SamA7thy0TqvDN38Fdj-OY_Ka/view?usp=sharing)



**UPDATE December 10<sup>th</sup> 2025 – RESPONSE FROM AGENCIES!**

Consultation is going to be reinitiated on wolverine for the Kaniksu project which will presumably result in a new, BETTER BiOp for the wolverine

AND,

**Until a new BiOp is issued, the Kaniksu OSV project is on hold. NO NEW OSV OPENINGS!**

You can read the agencies responses HERE!  
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1f07y8lvYekaDTDmUxncE3hIWiw49lh6?usp=sharing>

# Hip-Hip Hooray for Project 7B!

BY: JON QUINN HURST

## PROJECT 7B: IMPORTANT SCA ALLY IN THE PROTECTION OF SELKIRK BASIN

### CELEBRATING A SISTER NONPROFIT DOING GREAT WORK!

Project 7B is a non-partisan non-profit organization based in Bonner County that focuses on helping the residents understand and become more involved in land use planning. Founded in 2016 by a group of residents concerned about land use planning in Bonner County, Project 7B has long been a critical ally in the protection of the environment of the Selkirk Basin.



“Project 7B works to demystify land use planning processes so people can be more involved. Poor planning leads to bad decisions about our ‘commons’ - the land, air, water, and vegetation we all rely on to live,” said Susan Drumheller, co-founder. “Project 7B focuses on education, advocacy and balance in land use planning policy issues.”

A county zoning meeting can be tedious - it might put you to sleep - but what happens there can become what keeps folks awake at night.

Project 7B actively tracks what is happening in Bonner County related to land use planning and shares that information with residents through the Project 7B web page, and through Facebook. Zoning and land use regulations can be used to preserve the quality of life and the environment of Bonner County.

“A county zoning meeting can be tedious - it might put you to sleep - but what happens there can become what keeps folks awake at night.”

As the population grows and the pressure to develop land increases, we are facing the challenges common to rural, “frontier” communities- we have come face to face with the “loving this place to death” problem.

To be able to preserve the quality of life in Bonner County it is critical to balance growth, development, and environmental protection through responsible, strategic land use zoning, regulations, and oversight. That takes community involvement, and that is where becoming educated about land use planning in Bonner County, and using the information provided by Project 7B to become a grass roots advocate to help shape a more balanced approach to planning.

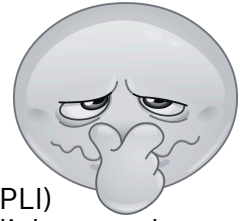
Please check out the Project 7B web site at: <https://project7b.org/>. The web site provides very helpful information about current planning issues, and has a superior Bonner County Story Map (land use issues explained!). There is a link to sign up for the Project 7B newsletter. In addition, there is a webinar: Land use Planning 101 in Bonner County.

Also check out Project 7B on Facebook where you can find regular updates: [https://www.facebook.com/BonnerCountyProject7b/?ref=embed\\_page#](https://www.facebook.com/BonnerCountyProject7b/?ref=embed_page#)

Project 7B is a critical ally in protecting the Selkirk Basin, and SCA is eternally grateful for the important work done by the P7B Board and Executive Director.

Please contribute to Project 7B: <https://project7b.org/support-project-7b/>.

# Collaboration – No Bueno for Conservation!



BY: AMY ANDERSON

Selkirk Conservation Alliance is calling out the Idaho Panhandle Public Lands Initiative (IPPLI) “Collaborative” for what it is; an attempt to “greenwash” development of our shared, publicly owned national forests, critical wildlife habitats and wildlife recovery zones for private industry profit; big timber and motorized recreation.

Topping the list of objectives coming out of IPPLI are;

- **“Mandating specific timber harvest volumes” from our north Idaho national forest lands. This would be in addition to the recently federally mandated 25% increase in logging within our national forests. This recommendation would greatly escalate the pace and scale of heavy logging over tens of thousands of acres of Idaho Panhandle National Forest lands.**
- **Allowing public motorized access through the Bog Creek corridor, all the way from the Kootenai River Valley to Priest Lake.**
- **Converting non-motorized trails in the Purcell’s & northern Cabinet mountains to motorized trails.**
- **Creating a winter recreation area that would allow over snow vehicle access (OSV) from November 15 to March 31 in an area which encompasses about 32,000 acres in the upper Pack River Basin. This would include critically important wildlife habitats in the upper Pack River, Roman Nose, Snow Lake, Bottleneck Lake, and Two Mouth Lakes during the most critical time of year for Threatened and Endangered species like lynx, wolverine and grizzly bears who depend on the winter snow solitude and are greatly disturbed by OSV’s.**

It is worth noting that motor vehicle use, mechanized vehicle use, road construction and or reconstruction, timber harvesting, mineral leasing and extraction & grazing are ALL already open to the public in ~90% (89.1%) of our Idaho Panhandle National Forest lands.

While the wins for timber extraction and the snowmobiling/motorized vehicle industries through the IPPLI collaborative are vast, the conservation gains, in relation to what is being traded away for use/extraction, are minimal.

The IPPLI collaborative is proposing ~16,900 acres of the Salmo-Priest (but excluding two of the most important sites; Hughes Meadow and Kaniksu Mountain) for Wilderness designation. In addition, a 39,000-acre wilderness encompassing Long Canyon, Parker Creek, Pyramid Lake, Trout Lake, the upper end of Ball Creek, and Myrtle Lake is being proposed for Wilderness designation.

It is also very important to understand that all of the IPPLI collaborative proposed Wilderness Areas are currently designated as Recommended Wilderness giving them THE SAME protections as Wilderness Areas. Although they do not host federal protections; motor vehicle use, mechanized vehicle use, road construction and or reconstruction, timber harvesting, mineral leasing and extraction & grazing are ALL PROHIBITED currently.

In closing, according to a recently published, decades long study by the World Wildlife Federation (WWF) species are declining/have declined on this planet in the last several decades by a whopping 73%. “Nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history ... and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating,” according to a global assessment report from the UN’s Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, “The health of ecosystems on which we and all other species depend is deteriorating more rapidly than ever. We are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide.”

Serious conservation groups believe that what is needed in this dire time is not more giveaways for human centric uses but staunch defense of what little Wilderness and wild lands we have left that preserve our woods, waters and wildlife.

None of the above wins for Big Timber and other user groups would be possible without the IPPLI collaborative. The IPPLI collaborative is being used to circumvent existing environmental laws and give control of the use & management of our Idaho Panhandle National Forests to local special interests.

Sadly, over the years, the “user groups” (Timber, Mining, Agriculture, Motorized and Non-Motorized Recreation and others) have “weaponized” collaboration. They largely no longer tangle with conservation groups in the courtroom, they join the Boards of these groups and get those groups to carry their football so to speak in the name of conservation. Boards are responsible for policies, programs and organizational direction and when the Board is made up of leaders from industry and “user groups” the core conservation mission is lost. The contemporary term for this admittedly genius tactic is “greenwashing”.

For example, a quick look into some of the largest so called conservation groups reveals that the President of the World Wildlife Federation was once the chief marketing manager for Procter & Gamble and Gillette, global consumer goods companies. The head of The Nature Conservancy was once a top dog at JP Morgan Chase.

Closer to home, Idaho Conservation League (ICL) (the “conservation” group facilitating IPPLI) Board of Directors member, Alan Harper is an acting Resource Manager for Idaho Forest Group and manages the forestry operations for four large-scale sawmills.

Is this the reason that the IPPLI collaboration is pushing for “mandating specific timber harvest volumes” from our north Idaho national forest lands?

In closing, Selkirk Conservation Alliance, does not support the recommendations of the IPPLI.

It is highly recommended that all local community members, conservation groups & government leaders support the full *science backed* goals and conservation objectives of the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (NREPA)

**Learn more about NREPA HERE - <https://allianceforthewildrockies.org/nrepa/>**

# Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities!

**SCA is a small, grassroots, environmental nonprofit that is almost entirely “powered” by community volunteers. Please consider giving your time to one or more of SCA’s upcoming spring volunteer opportunities. THANK YOU!**

## APRIL

- SCA FUNdraising Committee monthly meeting – April 7<sup>th</sup>, May 5<sup>th</sup> & June 2<sup>nd</sup> (zoom)
- Earth Day Coeur d’Alene – April 18 from 10-2 at the CdA Library (702 E. Front Ave. CdA)
- SCA Citizen Science Water Quality Monitoring STREAMS – April 21 half day
- Earth Day Sandpoint – April 25 from 10-1 at the East Bonner County Library (1400 Oak St. Sandpoint)
- SCA May “Living Classroom” instructor training day – April 30 from 10-12 (1591 Lakeshore Dr. Sagle)

## MAY

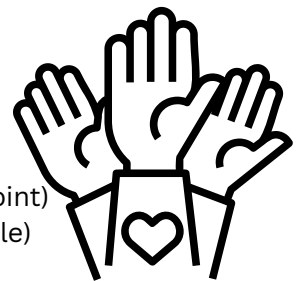
- SCA “Living Classroom” immersive field trips at the Waterlife Discovery Center – May 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> from 8-1pm (1591 Lakeshore Dr. Sagle)
- SCA Citizen Science Water Quality Monitoring STREAMS (TBD – usually third week of month)

## JUNE

- SCA annual HWY 57 Clean-up event – June 5<sup>th</sup> from 9-12 (meet at mile marker 16.5 ish, look for us!)
- SCA Citizen Science Water Quality Monitoring STREAMS (TBD – usually third week of month)
- SCA Citizen Science Water Quality Monitoring Upper & Lower Priest Lakes (TBD – usually third week of month)

If any of these opportunities interests YOU please contact Amy at [anderson@scawild.org](mailto:anderson@scawild.org) for more information!

We look forward to seeing you this spring! THANK YOU!



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

PLEASE NOTE, CURRENT **MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING WELCOME**, PLEASE RENEW YOUR 2026 MEMBERSHIP/DONATION IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY!

# “CeleBasin” MEMBERSHIP GET TOGETHER!

**JULY 23, 2026**

**4:30-7PM**

**TANGLEFOOT HANGAR**

100 WATERBIRD LANDING COOLIN, IDAHO

PLEASE JOIN YOUR FELLOW SCA SUPPORTERS FOR AN EVENING OF GOOD WINE (ARBOR CREST), BEER (TIMBERTOWN), HARD CIDER (TIETON CIDER WORKS) FOOD (FRESH MADE PAELLA, SALAD, ROLL!), MUSIC, FRIENDS AND SCA UPDATES!

**ARBOR CREST**

WINE CELLARS

**TIMBERTOWN**  
BEER CO.



**TIETON**  
CIDER WORKS

