

Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Background

Our Mission

“We believe that the 88,000-acre Scotchman Peaks roadless area, spanning the Idaho/Montana border, deserves permanent protection as wilderness. Faced with growth and change, we want to make sure that this special place stays the same.”

About The Friends

The Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, Inc. (FSPW) was formed in January, 2005 by residents of north Idaho and northwest Montana who believe the Scotchman Peaks roadless area, *deserves permanent protection as wilderness*. In the 5 northern counties of the Idaho Panhandle there are *no acres of designated wilderness*. Additionally, the Kootenai National forest has the smallest percentage of wilderness (<4%) of any national forest in Montana. No wilderness has been designated on the Kootenai since the original wilderness act passed in 1964, in part creating the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness.

Wilderness designation for the Scotchman Peaks area would offer the highest level of protection for a landscape, in the heart of the Yellowstone to Yukon corridor, which contains key habitat for a number of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species including Grizzly Bear, Bull Trout, West slope Cutthroat Trout, Canada Lynx, Wolverine, Mountain Goat and Grey Wolves. This botanically rich landscape includes mid level Cedar Hemlock forests and some of the southernmost occurrences of Interior Rain forest, neither of which are well protected in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Our goal is conservation of this landscape through Wilderness designation.

Our local communities will benefit from the unparalleled recreational and economic opportunities which wilderness provides. Many studies have indicated that in the west there is a strong link between protected public lands and diverse, vibrant economies. Our region is shifting from extraction based industries to one which recognizes the economic value of natural beauty and the associated “quality of life” features. Our communities also recognize the inherent value of being good stewards of our natural resources for current and future generations.

We are a grassroots, non-profit, 501c3 volunteer-driven organization with limited part-time staff. Our board, staff and volunteers are a dedicated group of ordinary and extraordinary folks whose passion, effort and determination will succeed in preserving the Scotchmans. We are singularly focused on working to bring about wilderness protection for the Scotchman Peaks. Through education and outreach we work to bring about the increased community awareness and support which will make wilderness designation politically inevitable for the Scotchmans. Some of our most effective outreach strategies include a coordinated media presence, the publication and distribution of our free newsletters and hiking maps, our summer and winter guided hike series, dynamic website and social media content, community events and presentations done by our staff and volunteers.

We ask for “supporters” rather than “members”. Instead of asking people to join us against something negative, we ask people to support us for something positive. This has brought together people reluctant to “join” groups, or who do not ordinarily support environmental causes. The result is positive community dialogue around wilderness values and conservation issues. We believe this has allowed us to grow quickly in size and diversity. The result is a large network through which we can distribute our educational material and alerts and sizable attendance for hikes and other events.

For more information about the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness and our work please visit us at:

www.ScotchmanPeaks.org