

Friends of Scotchman Peaks' efforts picking up steam

Local efforts have the area on cusp of wilderness designation

By ERIC PLUMMER
Sports editor

"In wildness is the preservation of the world." — Henry David Thoreau, author

When asked what he loves most about nature, Sagle resident Phil Hough answers with the above quote by Thoreau.

For decades, the Scotchman Peaks primitive area has had a small, but fervent groundswell of support to gain federal protection as a wilderness area, thereby preserving it in its pristine natural form forever. After past failed attempts, the cause had lain in limbo awaiting a jolt of energy — and along came Hough.

A nature lover and hiking-enthusiast, Hough saw a worthwhile cause in the area's preservation. In 2005, he helped establish the Friends of Scotchman Peaks, whose mission statement is: 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 this special place stays the same.

Their message has spread exponentially in the last three years, and with a new session of Congress around the corner, hopes are high that the wilderness designation could become a reality.

But what will it take, how will it



—Photo courtesy FRIENDS OF SCOTCHMAN PEAKS

Visitors to the Scotchman Peaks area may catch a glimpse of one of the area's mountain goats.

happen, what's the benefit and why should we care?

"You must be the change you want to see in the world." — Mahatma Gandhi, spiritual leader

Hough, who spent more than 20 years in the hotel business before

settling in Sagle five years ago, has made Scotchman his passion project. While he says he's merely one of many, he admits to putting in 20-30 volunteer hours a week. Along with the help of his wife, Deb Hunsicker, and a host of other volunteers, the

message is put out through a bi-monthly newsletter, pamphlets, an Internet site, hosting speakers and working various booths at community events.

See SCOTCHMANS, Page 9

MEANDERING MOOSE MOTEL

Come Stay With Us!
All rooms with wireless internet, microwaves, fridges, TV, phone and queen beds.

263-5323
South Marion at Hwy 2 Sandpoint, Idaho 83864

Voted "Best of Bonner County" in 2007

4507115-0329

ASE CERTIFIED **Steve's Import Auto Service, Inc.** **AAA**

"Maintenance is Cost Effective"

Quality Repairs and Maintenance of Import and Domestic Cars and Trucks

111 Michigan Street • Sandpoint, ID 83864 • 263-4911

450718S-0329