Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness (FSPW) is a non-profit organization. The proceeds from all events and sales benefit our wilderness preservation efforts. Donations are tax deductible.

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**The Future Looks Bright**

October 26, 7pm: Jan Griffitts and Jim Mellen will make a Scotchman Peaks presentation to the Sandpoint West Athletic Club. Shirts and sweats will be available.

**Doug Scott: Wilderness Historian, Author and Advocate**

Doug Scott, one of the nation's leading experts on wilderness, will discuss the history of wilderness protection. Doug will present selections from his book, The Enduring Wilderness, and will talk about citizen efforts to protect public lands. Doug will answer your questions about wilderness and talk specifically about efforts to protect the Scotchman Peaks area.

Please join Doug Scott, Friends of the Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, and other community groups at an event in your area:

- **October 26**, 6:00pm Coeur D’Alene, ID: North Idaho College, Student Union Building - Driftwood Bay Room
- **October 27**, 7:00pm Sandpoint, ID: Bonner County Historical Society Museum
- **October 28**, 7:00pm Troy, MT: The Hot Club
- **October 29**, 11:00am Clark Fork, ID: Scotchman Coffeehouse, (note this is a “meet the author” informal wilderness discussion event)
- **October 29**, 1:00pm Hope, ID: Hope Market Café
- **October 29**, 6:00pm Heron, MT: The Heron School
- **October 30**, 7:00pm Spokane, WA: Gonzaga University, Cataldo Hall - Globe Room

For more information, go to [www.scotchanpeaks.org](http://www.scotchanpeaks.org) or contact Phil Hough with Friends of the Scotchman Peaks Wilderness at (208) 255-2780.

Cosponsored by: the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, Gonzaga University, the Spokane Mountainiers, North Idaho College Outdoor Pursuits, Conservation Northwest, the Idaho Conservation League, the Cabinet Resource Group, Bonner County Historical Society, Hope Market Café, and the Scotchman Coffee House.

Monday, November 27, 4pm-7pm: Sip and Shop at Pend d’Oeille Winery with 10% of proceeds going to FSPW wilderness efforts.

If you are receiving this newsletter by mail and have an email address please help us save postage by sending us your email address.
Message from the Chair

By Phil Hough

A wilderness campaign, like a good house, requires a firm foundation. Without a base of support, neither would last for very long. But, working from the ground up, a sound structure can be built upon a solid foundation and will last a long time. While we have a long way to go, you are helping the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness to build the support needed to sustain this campaign all the way to success!

Our recent success are continuing right into autumn. We recently received a grant from the Maki foundation, which will allow us to continue our outreach efforts and build an even more solid base of support. Well over 150 people came out this summer/fall to join us on one of our hikes and our list of “Friends” now counts almost 900 people!! We now have outlets for our information and t-shirts in Sandpoint, Bonners Ferry, Hope, Clark Fork and Trout Creek. This summer we had two groups of students from Gonzaga University volunteer time to do trail maintenance projects. By all measures our community support continues to grow with remarkable leaps and bounds!

Congressional Wilderness Designation typically enjoys broad bi-partisan support, as long as there is a strong community consensus. Our community support is strong enough that we are making our first serious efforts to contact our congressional offices and introduce the concept of a Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Area. We want to make sure that the Scotchmans is on their “radar screen.” When we have sufficient community support to ask for legislation they will already be knowledgeable about the area. Meanwhile we hope you will help us to continue to build an even larger and stronger community consensus for wilderness. To help us with this, we are very fortunate to have the opportunity to host Doug Scott, wilderness historian, author and advocate for several speaking engagements in October.

Come join us for our Holiday “Sip and Shop” event on Monday Dec 11th at the Pend d’Oreille Winery, and as we enter the holidays remember our online store powered by Cafe Press! Go to www.scotchanpeaks.org for all your gift desires, from Scotchman note cards, to calendars, mugs, aprons, and bumper stickers there are so many items to choose from that you will surely find something for everyone. For the person who has nearly everything, bring her or him the gift of wilderness. By doing so, you will help us bring the gift of wilderness to our community.

What Grows There (Alectoraria sarmentosa)

By Ann Wimberley

If you hike or snowshoe in the Scotchmans, you will notice a yellowish gray green lichen hanging from branches of conifers. People in this area commonly refer to it as “Goat’s Beard”; in books it is also called Witch’s Hair.

Lichens result when fungi cultivate algae. Alectoraria means “unmarried”, probably referring to the scarcity of fruiting bodies on these lichens. Sarmentosa is Latin for “twiggy”. Alectoraria sarmentosa is found west of the continental divide as far north as Alaska and as far south as California. It is an intricately branched, pale, dull and pliant. It can be differentiated from the lichen genus Usnea by its lack of a central white cord.

Alectoraria sarmentosa provides food for ungulates (animals with split hooves), especially in winter. It is sensitive to air pollution. One can estimate the snow depth in an area by finding the “Alectoraria line” on trees. It can be used for dyeing fabric. It was used by Native Americans for bandages and diapers. It also makes a great addition to Christmas wreaths made from our local conifers.

Alectoraria sarmentosa, also known as Goats Beard or Witch’s Hair

Photo courtesy of Neil Wimberley
Peak Views

by Phil Hough

Our summer/fall hiking series was a great success. We want to thank all the hike leaders who took the time to share some of their favorite Scotchman places, and also want to thank all the over 150 intrepid souls who wandered with us into the wilderness on one or more of the 31 different hikes. Pictures and slide shows are nice, but nothing inspires like seeing the Scotchmans first hand!

We have put together a preliminary list of winter walks/snowshoes, just to whet your appetite. Watch our website and the January edition of this newsletter for a more complete listing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Hike Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sat Jan 14</td>
<td>E/M</td>
<td>Ross Creek Cedars – Jon Isacoff, co-sponsored with the Spokane Mountaineers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat Jan 27</td>
<td>E/M</td>
<td>Ross Creek Cedars - Jim Mellen</td>
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<td>Sat Feb 3</td>
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<td>East Fork Creek – Phil Hough</td>
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<td>Sun Feb 11</td>
<td>E/M</td>
<td>Ross Creek Cedars - Ann and Neil Wimberley</td>
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<td>Sat Feb 18</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Star Peak – Doug Ferrell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun Mar 4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Dry Creek Up and back on snowshoes or XC skis – Cesar Hernandez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat Mar 17</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Goat Peak Hop – Don’t be fooled – this is a GRIND - Jim Mellen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun Mar 25</td>
<td>E/M</td>
<td>Morris Creek Early Spring Hike or Late Winter Snowshoe – Phil Hough</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat Apr 21</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Scotchman Peak - the hard way, hike/ski/snowboard/randonee/snowshoe – only for the truly insane – led by Jim Mellen.</td>
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The Slow Hike to Scotchman Peak on September 16

By Jan Griffits

This was my 22nd trip up, but the others, ages 40-70 had never hiked it. The first two miles were tough on all as the trail climbs straight up. The trail has washed out over the years with deep ruts and lots of rocks so it was slow going. We stopped at every somewhat level spot to get our breath. About half way up we fixed some blister issues. When we hit the meadows, fog and cloud mostly obscured the view, but we were optimistic that it would be clear on top. Several, getting pretty tired, considered just waiting for the rest of us, but, by golly, they trudged on and everyone made it!!! No, the fog and clouds had not disappeared completely, but about 200 yards back down the trail, it cleared and the views were fantastic as always.

“Compton Crags” Fall Tour from September 28 through October 1

By Jim Mellen

Although the write-up on the hike was enough to keep a sane person at home, I eagerly signed up. Awe-inspiring is what the write-up mentioned and that is how I would characterize the tour. This is truly the heart and soul of the Scotchmans. This area is seldom visited due to its inaccessibility, but it is well worth the price of admission. Hike leader Sandy Compton picked his way through elk trails to avoid brush and to find a safe and natural route. The elk were bugling and left plenty of fresh sign, but stayed out of sight. A lone mountain goat, roused out of his solitude decided that the next drainage might be a better place to be. A day later, another, less skittish goat sauntered by to be photographed. Although I carried a tent, we slept under the stars every night. In all, we climbed 7 peaks over 6600 feet high.
From the Top

One of the joys of living in this area is the rhythm that the changing seasons bring to our lives. As we now enjoy the harvest from our gardens, we can also this winter begin to enjoy some of the results of hard work on wilderness designation. Carol’s efforts have been rewarded with another grant. Phil and Doug have introduced some of our national leaders to the concept of official wilderness designation for the Scotchmans. Doug Scott’s visit is a wonderful opportunity for us and our communities to learn more about what is involved in wilderness designation. And best of all, it is time to sit by the fire and plan snowshoe trips to enjoy the quiet and awesome beauty of the Scotchmans. Let it snow!

Happy Holidays

Ann Wimberley

Wild Creatures of the Scotchmans – Tailed Frog

By Jon Burkhart

Hikers in the Cabinet Mountains frequently spend time along high mountain streams. Many do not know that this is an opportunity to see a very unique little animal called the tailed frog. These primitive frogs live in cold, clear, steep gradient mountain streams with fast flowing water. Only about two inches long, these little guys live a long but arduous life. Because of their cold water habitat and short open season they mature very slowly. They take two or three years to change from tadpoles to frogs and do not reproduce until they are seven or eight years old. (Compare this with spade toads in the desert rain pools that go from hatching to maturity in eight days.)

They are quite different from most frogs in that they appear to have a tail which in males can be up to a quarter of an inch long. This is not actually a tail but a reproductive organ needed because this unusual group of frogs fertilizes their eggs internally. The eggs are laid the summer following breeding. The eggs hatch in August at maximum water temperatures and the greatest availability of food. Tadpoles have a strong suction like mouth used to eat algae off rocks; adults eat both water and terrestrial insects. Mostly nocturnal, the adults will leave the water on wet nights to feed on the forest floor.

Also setting them apart from other frogs is the fact that their eyes have vertical pupils and their tongue is attached at the back of the mouth instead of the front. The specie found in our area is ascaphus montanus and is genetically different from those found outside of the Rocky Mountains. While not rare, they are very sensitive to stream degradation caused by human activities.

The next time you are ambling along a high mountain stream, take a look and see if you can spot this special little brown frog that survives in these difficult habitats.

Scotchman Coffee House Now Carrying FSPW Shirts and Sweats

Sweatshirts and T-shirts are now available in Clark Fork at the Scotchman Coffee House, which opened on October 21. Open from 6am to 6pm, they will also have available our newsletters and brochures.

Other outlets include Outdoor Experience in Sandpoint, The Hope Market Café in Hope, Far North Outfitters in Bonners Ferry and Huckleberry Thicket in Trout Creek, MT. Out of the area, contact jmellen@imbiris.net.

Other Scotchman Peaks merchandise is available in our online store run by Café Press at www.scotchmanpeaks.org/store.html.

Happy Holiday Shopping!

Scotchman Rocks

What is this rock? If you want to see this rock for yourself, it’s out in the proposed Scotchman Peaks Wilderness. Our resident geologist, Bill Martin, is off hunting either elk or rocks. His column will return next issue.

Ascaphus truei

Photo courtesy Pseudacris

Wish List

We need an outdoor booth cover. Please contact Jan Griffitts at (208)265-4380 or jan@looptravel.com for more information.

Photo courtesy of Phil Hough
Mr. Scotchman Goes to Washington

By Phil Hough

Or at least his spirit was with Doug Ferrell and Phil Hough when they traveled to our nation’s capital, Washington DC, to participate in “Washington Wilderness Week”. Sponsored by The Wilderness Society and the Campaign for America’s Wilderness this event drew nearly 130 wilderness advocates from 22 wilderness campaigns from around the country. The week started out with speakers and workshops designed to sharpen wilderness advocacy and lobbying skills. Congressional wilderness champions were honored at a Tuesday night reception where they offered their insights into the world of wilderness politics. And plenty of time set aside for “hill” visits allowed us to see a number of our congressional offices. The Scotchmans are now on the political map as we provided background briefings about this special area to a number of key congressional staffs, laying the groundwork for future legislation.

Birds Found on the Scotchman Peaks – Owls

By Earl A. Chapin

There are 11 species of owls in our area that are here year round, and one, the Snowy Owl, that migrates here from Alaska and the Northwest Territories in mid winter each year. I am not going to describe each owl because there are too many. They will be listed in all bird books. All owls eat small birds and rodents.

The Great Gray Owl is 22 inches long with no ear tufts. It is scarce in our area. It is the only large owl with yellow eyes except the Snowy. They live in pine and spruce forests, sometimes near fields.

The Snowy Owl is 20 inches long, almost pure white and migrates to North Idaho in midwinter. It is very tame and will allow you to walk up fairly close. They feed on lemmings and other rodents and hares. On November 2, 1993, four of us were trolling on the lake near Hope when a Snowy landed on the deck of our boat.

The Great Horned Owl is also 20 inches long and is our most common owl. It is brown and has large ear tufts. They often nest near homes and old buildings. I have two friends who have had Great Horned Owls nesting in their yards for years. Most Owls return to the same nest every year. They also kill crows.

The Barred Owl is 17 inches long and has no ear tufts. They nest in heavily forested areas near water.

The Northern Hawk Owl is so named because it has a long tail like a hawk and is very rare in our area.

The Long Eared Owl is 13 inches long and lives in woods near open country. They have long ear tufts.

The Short Eared Owl is 13 inches long and lives in open country, fields and wetlands. They have no ear tufts.

Boreal Owls are rare in North Idaho. I have seen only one, on Myrtle Creek near Bonners Ferry.

The Northern Saw-Whet Owls are fairly common in our area. They have no ear tufts.

The Western Screech Owl is 8 inches long and has ear tufts.

The Northern Pygmy Owl is quite common in winter. It is only 6 inches long and has a long tail.

Burrowing Owls have been in this area, but they live in boroughs like ground squirrels and people can’t resist shooting them. The last colony I knew of was near Bonners Ferry. People can’t seem to resist shooting them even in areas where they are common such as Arizona, Colorado and Montana. It is an ongoing problem.

Along the Trail

Summer ’06 edition of “Broadside”, the newsletter of Great Old Broads for Wilderness, included an article on the “wildlands” issue in the Kootenai National Forest

September 4th: The Spokesman Review ran a front page article and photo on a hike Chris Anderson (photographer) and James Hagenruben (reporter) made with Phil Hough and Jim Mellen.

September 8: Dr Fred Rabe, Professor Emeritus at the University of Idaho, in a letter to the Forest Service reported his results in tests of the biotic integrity score and the biotic index of water samples from 5 creeks in the proposed Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Area. He described Upper Spar Creek as “one of the most pristine habitats ever sampled”. His letter concluded: “The pristine waters as described above provide a high quality indicator to the watersheds and land itself, enough of a reason for establishing a wilderness here.”

October 12-15 Phil Hough attended The Patagonia Tools for Grassroots Activists Conference to further develop the skills useful in running an effective campaign for wilderness.

October 14: FSPW manned a table at the Idaho Conservation League’s Wild Idaho North Conference on global warming and climate change.
Tales of Scotchman Peak

Looking back on a hunt

By Cesar Hernandez

The dark comes quite a bit earlier in the fall, usually accompanied by cooler weather, overcast skies and chances of rain. This moderator of our biological clock informs us of the season’s change and the infinite wisdom of stocking our winter larder with food and fuel (wood). For many of us in the Northwest, hunting season, an exercise oft misconstrued with bloodlust, epitomizes this change, something that but a few non-hunters really understand.

Sure there’s some ritual like sighting your rifle, sharpening your knife, checking out your survival pack, wet weather gear and boots, but that’s just about making yourself safe and somewhat comfortable when you know day to day conditions can turn harsh on a dime. The real hunting experience is all about what you might get to see aside from game. Little things like the beauty and variety of mushrooms if the season has been really wet. Or the greenness and patterns in dragon moss hanging in the damp overture of trees in a creek bottom. Maybe the golden leaf floor litter of a birch tree or tamarack forest, or the unique shape in some twisted or massively elegant tree. Sipping water drops off pine bough tips, seeing a rabbit somewhere in between snow and hare or hearing the lawnmower like drumbeat of a grouse. There’s waterfalls and holes in the ground, some man-made mine adits and others the opportunistic dens of bear. Sometimes it’s just an interest in the footprints of another hunter where you might least expect them or the gatherings of a pack rat or coyote under some rock overhang. That’s the sightseeing of hunting.

One year opening day it was the underfoot crunch of snow at the small door of an even smaller old miner’s cabin way up the East Fork, on a morning that overcast settled into the basin made everything virtually invisible. The greeting from outside returned with an invite to step in and huddle up to the fire of the small (24” x 18” x 18”) woodstove that kept winter’s breath barely at bay. The large wooly bundled mass that came in through the door was Paul McDowell, a neighbor, friend and unexpected guest in that alpine basin. Agreeing that something that couldn’t be seen couldn’t be hunted we parlayed the cloud cover into hot cocoa and a couple hours of small talk. As that ran out, the morning cloud cover partially lifted, and we shared our hunt plans before stepping out in different directions in the basin.

Skirting a waterfall and pushing snow I ventured up and west below the Sawtooth. Wasn’t long before an opening amongst some snow beaten scrub pines revealed the majestic lines of a 6-point bull elk making his way down through the knee high snows of the pass. Through the adrenaline pulse of heart-beats I raised my rifle and sighted in at 150 yards, wondering if a standing shot was all the time I might have? Then just as I squeezed my trigger a shot resounded off to the east and his Royalty turned his head; I missed. He looked & listened while I loaded another round. Straight and true, my second shot caught this majesty just below the ear and he fell into the snow. The hike up with no corresponding flurry of flight instantly told me this had become a successful hunt.

As I came upon my prize, his labored breathing unfolded the proud magnificence of a life cut short. Exhilaration was tempered by sorrow and after a short time of acknowledgement and thanks I went about the task of preparing nature’s bountiful gift.

With two friends over three long days I labored to recover and remove this prize. When I next met Paul, he asked me what went on that day, saying that it sounded like a small war had broken out in my direction; and then added that it was his shot over to the east that had bagged a nice sized six point buck. As for me, with a freezer full, my first day hunting was my last day hunting that season; and for what it’s worth, bagging the big one, while gratifying, made me miss the rest of the little things I really look forward to during hunting season.
Fire Ecology

By Phil Hough

In late September a small group of hikers set off on the Spar Peak Trail. The day was cool and damp, and the upper slopes were still smoldering from the fire ignited by lightning in July. (Because of this the trail was officially closed. However, we had received special permission from the Kootenai Forest to make this trip.) As we climbed towards the peak, the acrid smell of wood smoke hung in the air like smoke curling around a chimney on a winter day. Most likely the landscape will continue slowly smoking until the early snows of winter.

Midway up we came across a curious, but wary, black bear not more than 3 or 4 years old. He looked up at us, myopically, momentarily suspending his late season scavenging of huckleberries. After he determined us to be no threat he ambled off into the bushes and away into the woods.

As we climbed higher we reached the ridge overlooking the North Fork of Ross Creek.

From here we could see the mosaic pattern burned into the landscape by the fire. As with most fires, the burn was not even, but a patchwork. Islands of green trees were occasionally surrounded by charred stumps. Some areas burned more intensely than others but often the fire had merely crept along the ground at such a low intensity the trail tread itself provided a "break". Beargrass burned in some places so lightly that the tufts at the base stood intact above the ashes. In all likelihood the spring re-growth will provide valuable wildlife browse. In general, the fire that burned through here showed all the signs of fire which will bring many ecological benefits.

One word of caution: despite the ecological benefits, the fire has created some serious hazards. In some places burned trees fell across the trail and stepping around them meant slipping and sliding on very sloppy soils. Burned snags teetered over the trail, potential hazards in even a moderate wind. This means that before setting out next spring, check with the Kootenai Forest about current trail closure status.

Zags on Morris Creek

By Laura Street

Early one cold threatening-to-rain weekend in September, my Ecological Thought and Green Practice class set out from the Gonzaga University campus to fulfill some service learning hours for the class. We were headed to a remote part of Idaho whose name I had heard only in passing.

Our destination was the Scotchman Peaks area, with plans to camp off of Lightening Creek Road and perform maintenance work on the Morris Creek Trail.

Upon our arrival we hustled up to the trail and were given a brief safety lecture by a member of the Forest Service. We were introduced a variety of new tools, Pulaskis, McLeods, and an array of shovels and clippers. The trail had not been worked on in the past ten years, so we had four miles of trail clearing ahead of us. Setting out through a thick, cedar canopy, we crossed over tributaries that fed into a larger, faster running creek that skirted the edge of the trail. Our first good view of the creek brought the beginning of the day’s work. The trail wound around a steep incline cascading down to the creek; the trail itself was slowly working its way down as well. Tools brandished, we leveled the incline of the trail to protect it from further erosion.

The rest of our work proceeded in the same fashion: a bit of hiking until a section of the trail in need of work was found. Pulaskis then flew, McLeods scrapped and clippers clipped their way to trail perfection. Only a few members of our class reached the end of trail, a steep incline to the top of a ridge where the trail peters out into a bowl with remarkable views. We passed an array of plant and wildlife along the way. Because the trail is not widely used, its remoteness only contributed to the beauty.

At nights and later in class, we learned more about the Scotchman Peak area from members of the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness and the Forest Service. FSPW is attempting to get the area congressionally designated as wilderness. Though the forest has not been logged, and damage from other manmade activities has been minimal as of yet, official wilderness designation would forever protect the distinctive wildlife in the area.

By the end of the relaxing weekend, the sun had come out and we taking more and more frequent breaks to enjoy the environment around us. It was easy to see that I would be back, hopefully at a time when the abundant huckleberry, service berry and wild ginger were at their peak. I also look forward to catching my own glimpse of the Scotchman Peaks resident bears, moose, elk, badgers and other wildlife that are abundant further into the forest.
How You Can Help

Support Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness

As concerned citizens, we support protecting and preserving the Scotchman Peaks area for ourselves and future generations. Highway 56, Highway 200, Lightning Creek Road, and Rattle Creek/Keeler Road surround this 88,000 acre scenic area which straddles the Idaho and Montana border. Wilderness Designation for the Scotchmans will protect plants and wildlife, including the endangered grizzly bears, mountain goat, and bull trout; it will protect water quality; and it will preserve a special place for future generations. In addition, local communities will benefit from the unparalleled recreational and economic opportunities such wilderness provides.

Name: ______________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________

e-mail: ______________________________________________________ Phone: ________________________________

☐ Donation enclosed (optional). Donations are tax deductible.

Please make checks payable to the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness. Detach & Mail to the address below.

Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness
PO Box 2061, Sandpoint, ID 83864