

PEAK EXPERIENCE

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Endowment protects a wild future

We are turning sweet sixteen!

As the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness turns “sweet sixteen,” we are looking to the future and gearing up to build an endowment fund. This is a major step that we are excited to share with you. But before we talk about the future, let’s take a look back at how we got here.

For almost two decades, we have been growing deep roots in Idaho and Montana. We started out as a group of volunteers with a mission to protect a beloved wild place. Today, we are still volunteer-driven and rooted in a love for the Scotchmans. But our scope has grown greatly to meet the needs in our communities.

We’ve grown our trail program—working countless hours building trails and keeping mountain goats safe. We’ve started teaching hundreds of students about the great outdoors. And now we have staff around the region—boots on the ground that are building community around a love for our wild backyard.

What this all means is that the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness is here to stay. We’re committed to protecting the Scotchmans for the long haul, and that means so much more than passing a bill to designate a Wilderness Area. Even after we designate the Scotchmans as Wilderness, we will continue to restore the land and build community around a love for our wild backyard.

So, we’re faced with a question—how do we plan for forever? The answer is the creation of an endowment fund.

“We’re faced with a question - How do we plan for forever? The answer is the creation of an endowment fund.”

Our endowment fund will ensure that 20 or 30 years down the road, we will still be clearing trails so that hikers can discover the wonders of the wild



Phil Hough

Scotchmans. An endowment means our children and grandchildren will have the chance to identify animal tracks and wildflowers with FSPW volunteers. It ensures that our communities will forever benefit from the enduring legacy of wilderness.

“Even after we designate the Scotchmans as Wilderness we will continue to restore the land and build community..”

In the coming months, we will be calling on you, a friend of the Scotchmans, to make a donation or pledge to our endowment. Your gift does not have to be big, and there are so many unique ways to give. You can add FSPW as a beneficiary in your will, give through an IRA, or donate land. Visit www.scotchmanpeaks.org/endowment or contact info@scotchmanpeaks.org.

-Phil Hough



Leave a legacy for future generations. Learn more at scotchmanpeaks.org/endowment.

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FSPW announces 2021 scholarship winners



From left to right, Halie Moore, Brice Nickle and Isabelle Kapan are three of our seven scholarship winners this year.

School is out for summer! And that means a new class of budding scholars is on its way to bigger and better things.

Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness is happy to support college-bound students graduating from North Idaho and Northwest Montana high schools. And seven regional students are heading to college with a little extra support thanks to their winning essays in the FSPW scholarship program.

This year, our winning students are Isabelle Kapan of Libby High School, Gabrielle Pallister of Troy High School, Josey Laine Neesvig of Thompson Falls High School, Wesley Simko of Clark Fork High School, Olivia Lynch of Sandpoint High School, Madeline Wuthrich of Forrest Bird Charter School, and Halie Moore of Priest River

Lamanna High School.

Students earned their scholarship awards by writing essays about wilderness or nature-related experiences. The essays demonstrated a good

"Nature helps me to see our world from a different perspective. ... It reminds me to never take the wilderness we are surrounded by for granted."

-Excerpt from Isabelle Kapan's winning essay

understanding of wilderness values. That means topics centered on activities like hiking, hunting or fishing that don't rely on motor vehicles or other disruptions to the natural world. Winning writers also reflect on how those outdoor experiences shaped

them as people.

This year, essays covered a diverse range of themes. They capture the experience of getting caught outdoors in a hail storm, embarking into the wild for conservation education and hitting the lake in search of largemouth bass — just to name a few. Selected students will record themselves reading their winning essays for episodes of FSPW's Your Wild Place podcast.

Congratulations to this year's winners! If their wilderness writing is any indication, a promising scholastic career awaits them in higher education.

Remember to watch www.scotchmanpeaks.org for podcast episodes featuring our scholarship winners and all our other upcoming events.

Amy Rae Pearson to guide Montana programs

Amy Rae Pearson knows a thing or two about Montana. And she should — her family has lived there for quite a while.

A fifth-generation Montanan, Amy is as closely connected to the state's wild places as she is with her own kin. Her close connection to nature informed many of her educational and professional endeavors over the years, which are plentiful and impressive.

Amy is a professor and poet inspired by the natural world. Between her Ph.D. in organizational communication, experience as the former president of Montana Wilderness Association's Flathead Chapter and deep roots in the West, she is inspired and motivated by our wild places.

That makes her the perfect person to join Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness as the full-time Northwest Montana coordinator. She'll direct programs and community events for the Scotchman Peaks-adjacent communities in Montana, bringing a personal touch to each new undertaking.

Amy shared a few of her thoughts with us as she prepares to take on her new role.

FSPW: What are your feelings starting the new position?

ARP: I am thrilled to start my position as an Outreach Coordinator for FSPW in Lincoln and Sanders Counties! As one of my friends puts it, I am a person who 'orients myself to the land'; my natural inclination in a place is to aim to understand the mystery of the geography and all its elements.

I have been working on issues of Wilderness and landscape in various



Amy Rae Pearson is a poet, conservationist, and fifth generation Montanan.

ways throughout my lifetime. I feel lucky, motivated and ready to devote myself to work that engages the passion in my heart for wild places and people. I am honored to do this important work.

FSPW: What are some of the first objectives you want to tackle in the role?

ARP: I have a lot to learn! My first objectives are to start meeting the people and places of Sanders and Lincoln Counties. This is beautiful and vast country over here with a unique history and heritage of its own. I want to hike the trails, hear the stories, drive the dirt roads, write some things down.

I am thirsty for community, and

anxious to grow connections in the area and on the land.

FSPW: What does Scotchman Peaks mean to you personally?

ARP: The Scotchman Peaks represent the ideal possibility of what Americans can accomplish. Our history shows that we can work together to preserve wild places in the West. This is one of those places that deserves our attention and protection.

The first time I went up Scotchman Peak proper last summer, I was deeply inspired by the vastness and natural beauty connecting Idaho and Montana. You could spend your life learning this country, and what a beautiful life, indeed.

-Cameron Rasmusson

Volunteer Spotlight: Juli Thurston

If you take a look at our programs over the past year, you'll notice one trait they all have in common. That trait is volunteer participation. Every education, outdoor recreation, or fundraising event involves community participation at each level. Some volunteers stand out especially brightly.

That's why we take the time to spotlight those that give back to

the Scotchmans in our Volunteer Spotlight.

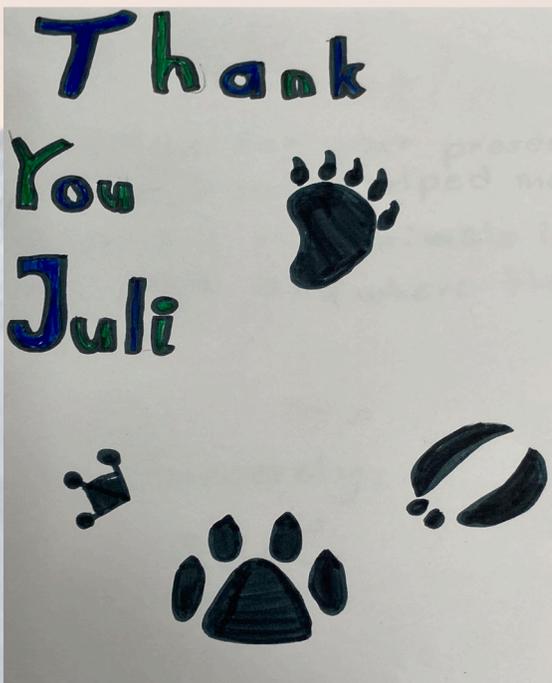
This winter has been defined by one volunteer in particular: Juli Thurston. Juli has been involved with each and every program the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness have hosted over the colder months. She was an integral part of our remote Winter Tracks curriculum, leading lessons on identifying animal tracks for all three virtual events. Her lessons incorporated concrete information, personal stories, and plenty of student input. The next time a 5th grader from Bonner, Lincoln or Sanders county shouts out the name of an animal track along the trail, Juli just might be to thank.

Juli's passion for saving the wild Scotchman's doesn't end with youth. She led multiple winter hikes into the Scotchmans for folks of all ages. She has also already signed up to lead not one, not two, not three, but four hikes over the summer as well! You

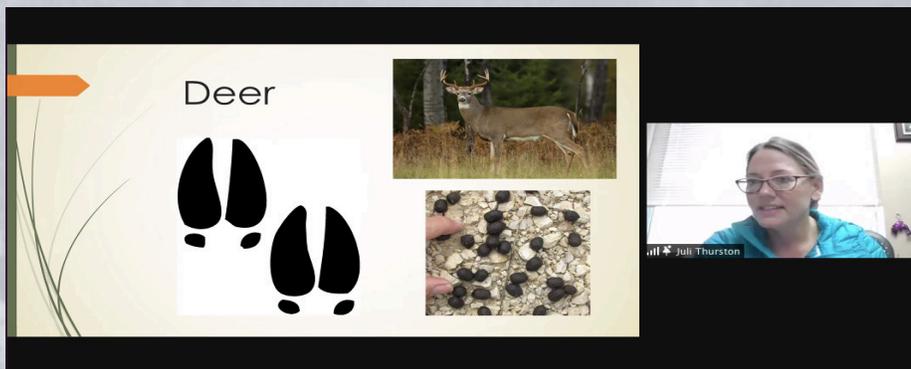
can sign up for her hikes on our website. Act fast though, hers are often the



Juli Thurston



A thank you card from Libby, Mont.



Juli teaching students about deer scat and tracks on Zoom

first to fill up.

When she's not out on the trail, Juli plays a pivotal role in the Sanders County community as an Extension Agent with Montana State University. She has also been an FSPW board member since January 2021 where she has helped to coordinate events like the Incredibly Wild Online Auction.

Thank you Juli for dedicating so much time to sharing your love of the outdoors with others!

-Henry Jorden

Bright sun, fresh air, full hearts

Keeping the Scotchmans wild is made possible thanks to our dedicated volunteers. Together, we build trails, lead hikes, and keep mountain goats safe. Join us this summer to explore our wild backyard!

WHAT WE'RE PLANNING SUMMER 2021

31 Trail Ambassador Days

19 Trail Project Days

13 Volunteer-led Hikes

10 Community Events



Henry, our Trail Stewardship Coordinator clearing trail at Evans Landing this Spring.



Bluebird hiking days await!



Hike participants on Goat Mountain during an early season hike led by Rebecca Sanchez.

find us on [facebook](#) • [instagram](#)

Summer 2021 Program Schedule

HIKES

We get people into the Scotchmans all year long with volunteer led hikes.

May 15 - Goat Mountain
 May 21 - Ross Creek Cedars
 May 24 - Blacktail Creek
 May 31 - Delyle Ridge
 June 8 - Spruce Lake
 July 11 - Family Fun Hike
 June 16 - Goat Mt Ecology Expedition
 July 07- Wildflower Walk
 July 18 - Spar Peak
 July 25 - Little Spar Lake
 Aug 10 - Huckleberry Hike
 Sep 10 - East Fork Peak
 Oct 10 - Scotchman Peak



SCAN TO BROWSE OUR FULL LIST OF EVENTS!

TRAIL PROJECTS

We build and restore trails so that everyone can continue exploring the wild Scotchmans.

May 21 - Goat Mountain
 May 28 - Scotchman Peak
 June 04 - Star Peak
 June 12 - Goat Mountain
 June 19 - Scotchman Peak
 June 26 - Star Peak
 July 16/17 - Star & Napoleon
 July 25 - Ross Creek
 July 30 - Star & Napoleon
 Aug 07 - Star Peak
 Aug 21/22 - Morris Creek
 Aug 27 - Morris Creek
 Sep 25 - Goat Mountain



EVENTS

We host events to build community around a love for our wild backyard.

June 5 - Thompson Falls Summer Season Kick-off Party

Join us at Big Eddy's from 3:00 - 6:00 MT for crosscut saw demos, beer, games, and goodie bags for all summer volunteers.

June 5 - Sandpoint Summer Season Kick-off Party

Join us at Utara from 5:00 - 8:00 PT for crosscut saw demos, beer, games, and goodie bags for all summer volunteers.

June 13 - Family Fun in the Forest Day

Join us at Memorial Park in Sandpoint between 2:00 - 4:00 PT for family games and hands-on educational opportunities about the outdoors.

June 27- Family Fun in the Forest Day

Join us at Memorial Park in Sandpoint between 2:00 - 4:00 PT for family games and hands-on educational opportunities about the outdoors.

Tales from the trails

You meet some interesting people when you're hitting the trails in Scotchman Peaks.

That's true for everyone. But perhaps it applies the most to the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness' Trail Ambassadors volunteers. It's their job to get out and tell their fellow hikers about safety on the trails. And the biggest part of staying safe and keeping our wild backyard wild is keeping a safe distance from the animals.

Mountain goats in particular are curious creatures, and they are drawn to the salty sweat most hikers are covered in by the time they reach the Scotchman Peaks summit. It might seem charming when the goats approach human groups, but it's actually cause for concern. For one thing, it habituates them to creatures that aren't a normal part of their habitat. For another, goats are wild and unpredictable, and when encounters with human go bad, people can wind up with serious injuries. In fact, the Scotchman Peaks trail had to be shut down temporarily after a particularly nasty biting incident.

"They aren't approaching you because they're friendly," longtime Trail Ambassador Mark Cochran said. "They're approaching you because they're habituated. In reality, they're scared of humans, but their craving for salt overpowers their fear."

Enter the Trail Ambassadors. This volunteer program gets folks out on the trails to remind people about the dos and don'ts of Scotchman Peaks hiking. It's an important safety service, and it gets volunteers out doing what they'd be doing normally — hiking!

Mark has had his fair share of inter-



Mountain goats look cuddly, but they can get cranky when they don't get their way.

esting meetings on the trails. He makes a point of asking people where they're from, and sometimes, they come up with some fascinating answers.

Usually, hikers are coming from the Inland Northwest, Mark said. But not always. One time, he ran into a group of former fraternity brothers who regularly met for new adventures, and that year, they happened to choose Scotchman Peaks. Another time, he met a pair of doctors visiting the wild Scotchmans from India.

That's what makes the Trail Ambassadors so important. Most visitors aren't going to intuitively know it's best to keep their distance from the goats. And those goats can be per-

sistent. Mark remembers an incident when a group of teenage boys were sunbathing at the summit. One persistent goat kept approaching, keen on getting to that salty sweat, and each time, they tossed rocks in her direction, prompting her to run away. When they picked themselves up to leave, the goat beelined to where they'd been lying, eager to lick the salt away from where their bare skin touched rock.

"It really illuminated how much they crave that salt and what lengths they'll go to get it," Mark said.

Interested in becoming an Ambassador? You can help! Check out www.scotchmanpeaks.org or email info@scotchmanpeaks.org.

-Cameron Rasmusson

find us on facebook • instagram

In-person events are back for 2021!



Family Fun in the Forest is a terrific opportunity to learn and play in the great outdoors.

This summer, we are focusing on bringing people together.

After over a year of zooming and social distancing, we want this summer to be filled with celebrations with friends and family in our wild backyard. That's why we are launching the Family Fun in the Forest series - a collection of educational events and hikes made for curious kids and adults.

We will be bringing elements of our winter track program like tree and animal track identification

"I love imagining my kids and their kids someday going into the Scotchmans, years from now, and being able to find their own wild place."

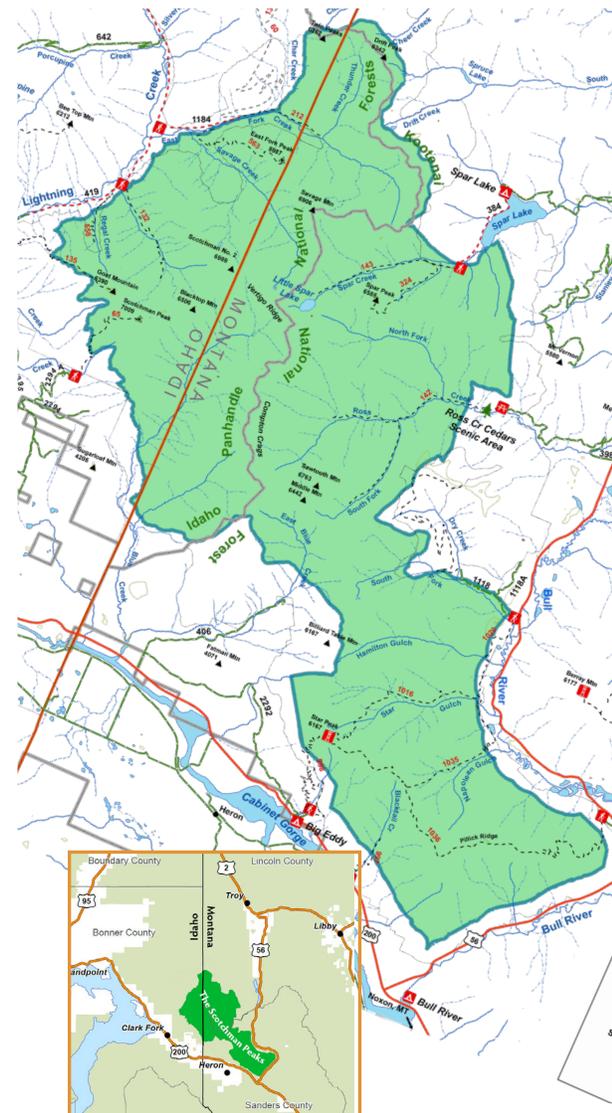
-Matt Nykiel

to the trails. We will be hosting themed hikes like wildflower walks and ecology expeditions where curious nature-lovers of all ages can learn about our local plants and animals. And last but not least, we will be hosting two outdoor education events in Sandpoint that will be filled with activities at the plant arboretum and games to learn how to stay safe in the woods.

It's one of many events that will bring people back together after a year apart. We're looking forward to it, and we hope you are, too!

FRIENDS OF
SCOTCHMAN PEAKS
WILDERNESS

Uniting thousands of Montanans
and Idahoans to save the wild
Scotchmans for our children and
grandchildren.



Save us a stamp!

Contact info@scotchmanpeaks.org
and ask to receive Peak Experience
by email rather than snail mail.

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YOU CAN SAVE THE WILD SCOTCHMANS!
Donate to FSPW

Help us save the incredibly wild Scotchman Peaks for our children and grandchildren.

To donate, visit our website or mail in the form below to: PO Box 2061, Sandpoint, ID 83864.

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***Other ways to give:** Learn about leaving a legacy at <https://www.scotchmanpeaks.org/endowment>