



# PEAK EXPERIENCE

The Newsletter for Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, Inc.

Volume 4, Number 2 • March / April, 2008



## Mission Statement

"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."



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

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

Editor: Ann Wimberley  
Designer: Pama Bangeman

## FSPW T-shirts

Saylor and Ryder Bond model our new FSPW T-shirts in children's sizes. Shirts and sweats are available at Mountain Meadows in Libby, Huckleberry Thicket in Trout Creek, Outdoor Experience, Café Bodega, and Eichardt's in Sandpoint, The Hope Market Café in Hope, Lucy's Deli in Clark Fork, and REI in Spokane. Out of the area, contact [jmellen@imbris.net](mailto:jmellen@imbris.net). Other Scotchman merchandise is available in our online store run by Café Press at [www.scotchmanpeaks.org/store/html](http://www.scotchmanpeaks.org/store/html).



## Along the Trail

The Trout Creek Ridgeriders, a large and well organized group of motorized forest users, listened attentively to a presentation by Doug Ferrell on Dec 4th. This group conducts a well attended Poker Run every year, funds a scholarship and donates to local causes. The group expressed that they had no intentions of seeking to open the Scotchmans area to motorized use. Further discussions are planned with this group about possibilities for collaboration, and a possible endorsement for the Scotchman's Wilderness project.

FSPW once again provided a display table both at the January Banff Mountain Film Festival's stops in Sandpoint and Coeur d'Alene as well as at the February "Radical Reels" film extravaganza where we greeted old and new "friends" alike.

Charlie Clough and Doug Ferrell made presentations to the Libby Kiwanis on January 15th and the Libby/Troy Board of Realtors on February 6th. Clough expressed that our campaign is getting good traction in this community. People are becoming aware of the issue and many are very supportive, especially after they have seen the images in our great power point show, and gotten their questions answered.

On February 28, Phil Hough presented an update on opportunities for Wilderness in the Scotchmans to a very receptive audience at REI in Spokane.

## From the Top

As I compile the articles and photos for each issue of the newsletter, it is fun to see the unique perspective each columnist brings. Each issue highlights some of the special stories and wildlife the Scotchman Peaks area offers. Enjoy.

**Ann Wimberley**



## Message from the Chair

By Phil Hough

Around the Scotchmans region we are having what some locals call a “real winter”. When the final flakes fall, the statistics will give some high ranking to the snow depths. But statistics only tell part of the story. Each person’s reaction to this snowfall tells us something about them and about winter too. Some are shoveling obsessively out of necessity or to bring order to the natural process of snowfall. Some just “cocoon up” till spring.

Still others leave home and the shoveling to hired hands and head to the hills for a powder fix. And not just to Schweitzer Mountain - some hardy souls head to the high backcountry, hopefully aware of avalanche risk and avoidance. Myself, I am content to stay low and snowshoe across the flats, where the deep snow covers trees and brush that are summertime obstacles. We each react differently to the snow and end up with a different explanation of what winter means.

Wilderness is like this too – our perceptions of wilderness are a reflection of ourselves. The way we perceive wilderness changes the way we interact with it and the “vision” we have of what wilderness is. As a result, we each will come to a different answer to the question of “what is wilderness,” because we ourselves are inextricably bound up in that definition.

Various observers could all agree that there are a certain number of acres and species in a given place. They will probably describe the same prominent features. But wilderness is more than a collection of geological and ecological features. Wilderness is framed by our expectations and interaction with the landscape.

One person may see wilderness as a place of recreational challenge, another as a retreat for solitude and reflection, still another may never set foot inside the wilderness but will feel its power as a place to preserve unique biological and geographical treasures. In fact, for some, the mystery that defines wilderness is lost if they actually set foot in it – entering it would tame the place and makes it less wild. Still others look on at wilderness with fear and stay away as a result of that.

Whether it’s winter or wilderness, our own attitudes, expectations and experiences define the landscape for us. We are each an intimate part of what wilderness means to us. It’s easy to look up and see that Scotchman Peak looks different draped in winter white than it does in summer. As the seasons change, as we change, as our experiences change, so too our understanding of wilderness will change. If you have never set foot in the Scotchmans, a hike at anytime will change your outlook about the area. Even if you are already familiar with the Scotchmans, a winter walk will reveal new perceptions of wilderness. For me, this is one of the greatest values of wilderness – in it we can challenge our perceptions of ourselves, of nature, and our connection with the natural world – in a way that we can do nowhere else.

## Wild Creatures of the Scotchmans

By Doug Ferrell

### The Short Tailed Weasel, *mustela erminea*

The ermine or short tailed weasel, known as a stoat in Europe, is a tiny and energetic predator. A view of one in the wild is a rare treat, as they are primarily nocturnal and, like other members of their family, very quick and active. They have gorgeous thick fur, pure white in the winter with only a black tip on the end of the tail. In summer the fur is a rich chocolate brown with a buff belly and the black tipped tail.

Even though the short tailed weasel is larger than its relative the least weasel, adult females only weigh 1-3 ounces, while the males weigh about twice as much. They are capable of killing full grown rabbits, as well as mice, voles, birds, and even insects and fish. Their slender bodies allow them to follow animals through tunnels into their homes. Prey is rapidly dispatched with bites to the base of the skull. The ermine can run on top of a thin crust of snow, and run up and down a tree head first, like a squirrel.

Ermine are found in riparian woodlands, marshes, open and wooded mountainous areas and far north into subalpine forests and tundra. Tree roots, hollow logs and rodent burrows are used as dens. The nests are lined with dry vegetation, fur and feathers. Side cavities are used as food caches and latrines.

Short-Tailed Weasel



Mating occurs in late spring or early summer. Young are born in April or May after an average gestation period of 280 days, which includes an 8 to 9 month period of developmental delay. Adults are promiscuous and form no lasting bonds, and the animals are solitary through most of the year. Females raise the young. Litter sizes average 4 to 9. The young are born blind and helpless, but grow quickly and are able to hunt with their mother at eight weeks.

In severe climates, ermine may hunt under snow and survive entirely on small rodents. Daily meals are essential to meet the ermine’s exorbitant energy and heat production demands. Ermine cache left over meals as a way of dealing with these demands. They have very keen senses that help them locate prey. Hares and rodents are mainly followed by scent, insects by sound, and fish by sight.

Peterson’s “Animal Tracks” book is very descriptive on the subject of this species: “Weasels traveling in search of prey leap here and there in energetic fashion, and you will find their slender snow trails suddenly changing direction, doubling back, looping here and there, disappearing under a half buried log to reappear farther on. Weasel tracks are eloquent. Looked at knowingly, they reveal the character of the nosy, eager little hunter.”





## What Grows There

### Kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)

By Ann Wimberley

Kinnikinnick is the forest ground cover for which our local chapter of the Native Plant Society is named. Petals of the pink flowers, which bloom from March to June, are fused into an urn shape. They hang over smooth margined leathery evergreen leaves. The fruits are bright red berries which persist throughout the winter, providing forage for bears, birds and other wildlife.

Kinnikinnick is a Native American word meaning “what you smoke”. The genus name is from the Greek words for bear and a bunch of grapes. The species name is from the Latin words for grape and bear. The other common name is bear berry.

**Kinnikinnick**

*Photo courtesy Marilynn George*



## Over the Top Volunteers - Walking Who?

By Lexie deFremery

To many of our friends, this “volunteer” is no stranger. You’ve seen her on the trails, at Scotchman Peak events, and volunteering at ICL’s Wild Idaho North conferences. Her involvement is so deeply embedded into this campaign that it’s hard to imagine success without her. Yet, as crucial as it is, few people know the depth of her support. That’s because she is as humble as she is giving. As partner to Phil Hough, Scotchman Peak’s chair, Deb Hunsicker’s contributions of time, energy, and money range from answering the phone and taking messages for Phil, to selling shirts and fielding questions at our display tables, to helping on our guided trail hikes.

But Deb is no stranger to the trails. Back in college days, she went on her first one-week camping trip in the Big Bend National Park in Texas. She discovered how that outdoor experience lined up with her university studies. Deb received her B.S. degree in Environmental Health from West Chester University in Philadelphia and her M.S. degree in Environmental Studies from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (near St. Louis). Deb’s older brother, Jeff, helped foster her interest in backpacking, taking her on one trip each year and providing hand-me-down equipment. Deb quips that a loud orange tent given to her by Jeff leaked so badly on a particularly rainy trip that she was compelled to buy a new one. It was wonderful, Deb says, and she still uses it today.

Somewhere Deb became hooked on the call of the trail, the outdoors, nature, scenery, and quietude. She and Phil have hiked the full length of the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail, and have paddled the Yukon River. They are planning this year’s 1,300-mile hike from Glacier National Park in Canada to Rawlins, Wyoming, the north half of the Continental Divide Trail. And yes, they plan to do the southern half in 2009.

So what does a seasoned hiker like Deb see in the Scotchmans? Well, Scotchman Peak I is her favorite. “It never gets old,” Deb remarks, and she’s hiked to the top countless times. On one of last summer’s guided hikes, the group saw a flock of bluebirds. There’s always something special there. Deb is happy about Phil’s commitment to the Scotchman Peaks’ campaign, as it fits his passion for wilderness. Hers too.

If you run into Deb on the trail, you might recognize her by her slim, athletic build, but also by her munching on baby carrots, which she carries with her even on the long treks. Phil gave her the handle “walking carrot” for her devotion to this vegetable! Oh, and thank her for being there for the wilderness, for the Scotchman Peaks, and for the rest of us wilderness junkies!



**Deb Hunsicker hiking along Lightning Creek with Mike Wallace and Mac McCandless**

*Photo courtesy Phil Hough*

## The Future Looks Bright

**March 29:** FSPW will have a table at the Trade Fair in Plains, Montana.

**April 20,** 11am-5pm, Sandpoint Community Hall: FSPW will make a presentation and man a table at the Earth Day Celebration.

### Libby Rod and Gun Club

“After several months of information gathering and discussion, the “members in good standing” of the Libby Rod and Gun Club voted to endorse the concept of a Scotchman Peaks Wilderness. 86% of these members voted in favor.”  
Don Clark, President



## Scotchman Past

### Gunnysack Johnson, Inveterate Prospector and Discoverer of The Elsie K / Hope Mine

By *Ida Daugharty Hawkins*

(Condensed version of a longer article)

There are few old timers living who remember when Gunnysack Johnson lived above the old Ranger Station in Clarks Fork, Idaho when he wasn't searching and prospecting for gold and silver in the mountains surrounding the community. He lived in a very small shack that contained all of his belongings except ore samples he carried with him in a burlap sack slung over his shoulder. His real name was Charles Thomas Anton Johnson, and he had played a major role in the economic history of Clarks Fork.

Other than cemetery records which show that Charles Johnson was born in 1861 and died in 1944, little is known about his background.

Small children ran and hid when they saw him coming down the road or walking on the wooden sidewalks. To them he was different and strange looking. Gunnysack's hair was unkempt, uncut, matted and dirty. Townspeople said, "No water probably touched him unless it rained." It was somewhat obvious that he probably didn't change his underwear until the long johns wore out and new ones were put on. Most of the hard working, friendly, men and women living in Clarks Fork took a 'spit' bath everyday, and a tub bath every Saturday, and they looked forward to socializing with their friends at gatherings, dances and celebrations. Gunnysack did not socialize.

In 1916 Albert H. Wilson, his wife, Elsie K. and their family had moved onto the Hawren ranch one and one-half miles from Clarks Fork west of the cemetery on the same hill. Their daughter, Emma Wilson Smith, who later taught at the Dorite and Clarks Fork schools said, "Gunnysack stopped frequently by the ranch and would walk around the house to the back porch where Mama always had a big crock of pickled apples. He would knock on the screen door and ask for a 'frizzled' apple. This happened with such frequency that many times Mama would not answer the door hoping he would go on his way." When he stopped by he would ask if Mr. Wilson was home. He was hoping to get permission to prospect on the property. His wish finally came true.

According to the Lewiston Herald, while digging a trench to pipe water from a spring to the ranch house, Wilson found indications of silver and lead ore. The next time Gunnysack stopped by for a 'frizzled' apple, he was told to go ahead and prospect. He was back in less than one week with ore he said he had found a short distance from the house.

Family members suspect that Gunnysack had the same pieces of ore in his burlap sack the first day he had come to speak with Captain Wilson. He had found the ore on the edge of the road going toward Millpond. What looked like a mound of dirt on the right hand side of the road was actually large chunks of ore. Assay results showed that the ore was above average in richness. The mine was immediately registered to Elsie K Wilson, Albert H. Wilson, and Charles Johnson, and was named the Elsie K.

In 1920, Captain A. H. Wilson had returned to Clarks Fork after

servicing a year as Adjutant General for the State of Idaho, and he decided to manage the mine himself. Workers literally scooped the ore from the surface of the earth. According to the Northern Idaho Press, it was tapped by four crosscuts, 350 feet apart, and in each crosscut there was shipping ore. Wilson shipped a car of ore about every six weeks to a smelter in Helena, Montana. The high-grade crude silver-lead averaged 58 per cent lead and 45 ounces of silver, netting about \$5000 a car.

Captain Wilson divided the Elsie K. into three shares (not stock). One third went to Gunnysack Johnson, one third to Elsie K. and one third to himself. He sold his wife's interest to L. P. Larsen of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho who had several mining interests. With the money he received from Larsen, he bought out Gunnysack's third interest in 1921 as Gunnysack Johnson was more interested in prospecting than he was in ownership of a mine. When Wilson sold his share to Larsen and Associates from Coeur d'Alene, a corporation was formed which sold stock, and the Elsie K. became the Hope mine. In the fifties, the vein came to an abrupt end. A major exploration effort was made to find the rich vein without success, and the Hope mine closed after providing jobs for young men and income for many families living in Clarks Fork for over 25 years.

Although Gunnysack Johnson received a few thousand dollars for his interest in the mine, he continued prospecting in the mountains, his eyes searching the ground before each step he took. He scouted promising outcroppings of rocks along Lightning Creek, Spring Creek, Mosquito Creek and multiple other places along the big fault. His daily habits did not change. He still lived in the same one room shack on the edge of town. He wore the same clothes and was never without his burlap bag. The location of his money was a great topic for discussion. Three young people attempted to make him tell by holding lighted matches to the soles of his bare feet. He wouldn't tell, and they were later prosecuted for their crime. He then moved into a root cellar on the old Mead Ranch. Gunnysack was known to many for his Indian dances and for sharing cans of sardines with his dog.

Gunnysack Johnson's insatiable desire to prospect was a gift to the people of Clarks Fork, as he had no attachment for the value of money or the usual comforts of a home. It is interesting to note that for over forty years, hundreds of prospectors had probably passed within ten to thirty feet of the lode he eventually discovered. The lode was there all the time, next to the road covered with leaves and an inch or so of dirt. Although the Hawrens and then the Wilsons had lived on that property for some time, they too, had not found it.

For many years the Hope mine benefited those living in the valley and Gunnysack was never officially recognized for his discovery. Until he was too old to walk, Gunnysack continued prospecting, always searching, and always hoping to find another lode.



## Peak Views

The Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness is proud to present our Winter 2008 snowshoe/hike series schedule! We may add hikes as winter progresses, so check the website occasionally for updates.

Winter is a time of silence and solitude; a time to experience the profound nature of wilderness. So strap on your snowshoes or slip into your cross-country skis and join us for one of our organized winter walks. From snow falling softly on the Ross Creek Cedars, to the steep and strenuous ascent of Star Peak with stunning winter panoramas we have something for every skill level and interest. You will see first hand why the Scotchmans are so special. Group size is limited and reservations are required. To sign up contact the hike leader listed. For more details go to our website at:

[www.scotchmanpeaks.org](http://www.scotchmanpeaks.org)

**Eileen Carney of Libby, MT snowshoeing  
in the Ross Creek Cedars**  
*Photo courtesy Phil Hough*



| E = Easy   |     | M = Moderate   | S = Strenuous | D = Difficult-Experienced Only |
|------------|-----|--|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Sun Mar 2  | M/D | <b>Ross Creek Cedars</b> – bring skis or snowshoes for another trip into the Cedars for wonderful winter fun. Susan Drumheller(208) 265-9565, <a href="mailto:sdrumheller@wildidaho.org">sdrumheller@wildidaho.org</a>   |               |                                |
| Sun Mar 16 | E/M | <b>Morris Creek</b> – “Flowers or Floods” - an early spring hike or late winter snowshoe up Morris Creek to look at Buttercups or Boulders - Phil Hough (208) 255-2780, <a href="mailto:nowhere_man97@hotmail.com">nowhere_man97@hotmail.com</a>   |               |                                |
| Sat Mar 22 | D   | <b>Goat Peak Hop</b> – This is not a “bunny – slope” hop, it’s a very steep trail, but if the weather cooperates it is an extremely rewarding trip. Last year all 12 who started made it to the summit, including a 68 year old. Snowshoes only. Jim Mellen (208) 265-5261, <a href="mailto:jmellen@imbris.net">jmellen@imbris.net</a> |               |                                |
| Fri Apr 18 | D   | <b>Scotchman Peak</b> “Scotchman on the Rocks” an early season assault – by whatever means appropriate and necessary – come prepared for mud, snow and a hard, fun, time. John Harbuck (208) 263-9894  |               |                                |
| Sat Apr 26 | D   | <b>Scotchman Peak</b> – “Scotchman on the Rocks, part 2” - an early season trek to the top, by whatever means possible - hike/ski/snowboard/randonee/snowshoe – For the adventurous <i>only!</i> Jim Mellen (208) 265-5261, <a href="mailto:jmellen@imbris.net">jmellen@imbris.net</a>   |               |                                |

## Birds Found on the Scotchman Peaks

### Kingbirds

*By Earl Chapin*

Kingbirds belong to the flycatcher family. While most flycatchers are small, Kingbirds are about 8 ½ inches long. We have two species of Kingbird in our area, Western and Eastern. The Eastern is the most common here because they like small farm fields near water. The Western likes open, dry country. The Western has a light gray head and throat and a very yellow belly. The back is dark gray. The Eastern has a black back and head. The throat and belly are very white. It also has a wide white band on the end of the tail.

Kingbirds are very aggressive and fearless. They will defend their nests from people and birds by diving on them and

actually pecking them. I have heard for years that in flight they will land on the back of a hawk or crow and pull feathers out of their back.

Most of us have seen small birds in the air, attacking large hawks and crows, I have always thought that the smaller birds just got close enough to scare the big birds away, but this summer a group of us witnessed two Red Tailed Hawks that were circling overhead. We watched as two Western Kingbirds took flight and began chasing the hawks. In just a few seconds one of the Kingbirds landed on a Hawk’s back and feathers began drifting toward the ground.





## Scotchman Rocks

### Mystery holes in Cabinet rocks

By Jon Burkhart

Those of us who spend time hiking in the Cabinets are aware the mountains we are walking on are sedimentary layers of rock from the Belt series. These layers were deposited in a shallow ocean bed over a long period of time during the Precambrian Era. Fine sands and silts gently settling on the bed of the ocean created nice neat layers of mud which eventually became very hard rock.

Occasionally however we find a mystifying anomaly where there is a small round rock of a different mineralogy embedded in these strata. How did another type of rock find its way to the bottom of the sea? They seem to have nestled into the muddy sediments without disrupting the other layers.

Confused by this a group of us invited three geologists from the

Idaho Geological Survey to come up and help us understand their presence. They explained that these are “inclusions” that formed when carbonate minerals migrated through the mud many millennia ago and formed round “crystals” which then hardened into rock along with the other sediments. When they are exposed these can weather out of the rock to become round or ellipsoidal cavities that range from 5 to 15 centimeters across.

You can frequently see these ancient features on the mountain peaks, talus slopes or in boulders in Lightning Creek and other streams. Understanding the history of the rocks you are walking on can add to the Cabinet Mountains experience. Excellent color geological maps of much of the Idaho Cabinets are available online from the Idaho Geological Survey.



**Inclusion in Precambrian Sedimentary Rock**  
*Photo courtesy Neil Wimberley*

## Trail of the Month

### 26 January 2008 -Squaw Peak Snowshoe Hike

By Betsy Fulling

Jim and I diverted from our usual routine and signed up for a Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness hike. We had hiked the long steep trail up Star (formerly Squaw) Peak once before, in summer. But, today's trek, with 4 other hikers all from the Spokane Mountaineers, would be on snowshoes.

The hike began early, at first light, after meeting briefly with the others and our leader, Todd. Instead of following the trail, the quickest way in winter is usually straight up. Snow began to fall at 9am. Todd broke trail most of the way however each of the guys took a turn at plowing thru the deep dry powder, sinking down 12" with each step. Heavy snow fell all day and we knew there would be no views. The only sign, almost covered in snow, says the top is still 2½ miles away but since we were going straight up, for us it would be only another mile or so. Catching a rare glimpse of the fire tower as we got closer, was exciting but short lived. By the time the cameras came out, it was completely

obscured in white.

Nearing the summit, wild snow was blowing, and stinging our faces; it was time to layer up before the inevitable whiteout hit. Remaining on my feet became top priority as I felt the strong wind trying to flatten me. Picture taking fell to Jim as I was otherwise occupied; he got several great shots of the summit. At last, we all made it up and got ourselves around to the 'leeward' side of the lookout, and out of the wind. Chris brought out a large Cadbury chocolate bar, which we happily feasted on to celebrate! Normally the views are spectacular, but not today. We lingered only for about five minutes before heading back down into the wind and blowing snow, where we could barely see each other, much less the trail. Thank goodness, the leader had his GPS; there was no way to see our tracks. At one point, I took a tumble and, as it is difficult righting oneself in deep powder on snowshoes, it took Jim and Todd to get me up. The same thing happened to Jim a bit later and it took Ed and Chris to spin him around and back on his feet.

The descent in the deep slippery snow was difficult so we all agreed that the next time we crossed the “trail” we would follow it, however much longer it took. My knees were killing me. When I fell, I painfully jammed the right one and I did not want a repeat of “Goat Mountain Syndrome” when my legs turned to rubber and I could barely stand.

It was snowing hard when we got down and the road was covered for our hour drive home. The others were planning to stop for pizza but 'Rosie' was waiting at home for us, probably with her legs crossed, so we begged out. It was nice to get out before dark, without any mishaps but with memories of a great hike with some great people.



**Whiteout**  
*Photo courtesy Betsy Fulling*



## Zags on the Trail

*Editor's note: This is the second of the top two papers on "What the Scotchman Peaks Area Means to Me" written by students in Dr. Jon Isacoff's Gonzaga University class "History of Environmental Thought as Being Conducted in Current Politics"*

### Why Not the Scotchman Peaks?

By **Nick Whitaker**

There is a spot on the Goat Mountain Trail where I stopped for lunch a few months back. It is one of the only spots in the first few miles of the trail that is both out of the cover of trees and somewhat flat. There is big a rock with a flat top that I sat on while I ate, looking west over Lake Pend Oreille. The view is still engrained into my memory today. The lake stretched out in front of me as far as the eye can see, flagged on the right by the city of Sandpoint, its buildings only specks in the distance from up here, and on the left by a steep, tree-covered mountain diving deep into the lake.

Oh what a view! What a backdrop as I contemplate all of life's mysteries. How sad the loss of such a place would be. The scattered buildings along the lake below do not affect me from so high up; this place is wild.

As my lunch continued on, I began to grasp a sense of what this wildness means to me, and what the Scotchmans can provide in that sense. Wildness means the freedom from those attachments in your life, and an opening of the mind to an unseen level of spirituality and thinking. To sit on the slopes of this mountain and

look down on society below me, I have risen above, both figuratively and literally, the clouds of civilization. Everything is so much clearer from above.

This is nothing new though. Thoreau and Muir were writing these same ideas a century or more ago. I had just never seen these sights as anything more than a pretty view before. But now, after sitting in the Scotchmans, where my mind wandered through all the space around me, I see how vital the wild places are.

Why the Scotchmans? The answers are plentiful. For the breathtaking views for one. The beauty you can see from along the river pales in comparison to what you see from high up on the peaks. To be able to look in any direction and see nothing but mountain after mountain all the way to the horizon is unparalleled.

Why the Scotchmans? For the biodiversity and the goats, both of which make for a healthier environment and a more enjoyable experience. Especially those goats.

Why the Scotchmans? Most of all, for its wildness. It gives us the opportunity to for our minds to open up, to really live our lives, and to become connected again to a nature that we seem to push away from a lot of the time. It is something you cannot learn through any other way than experience, and the Scotchmans is on a shrinking list of places to experience it. Once that connection is made, everything changes.

Go to the Scotchmans, make that connection, and you might start asking yourself, 'Why not the Scotchmans?'

## Tales of Scotchman Peaks

By **Pete Ferrell**

**(When not hiking the Scotchmans, Pete shoots baskets for the Noxon Red Devils)**

### Little Spar Lake, June 2006

The ice had just begun receding around the large boulder settled a few feet from the shore of Little Spar Lake where my brother Jack and I spent three early summer days. With a running start, we could long jump onto the fully rotten ice. The sunny weather hadn't yet warmed up the lake to bathing temperature by early June. After crashing through the slush on the surface, I have a one-instant memory of the panic-inducing cold and a vision of the blue water and white bubbles swirling around me, before I fast forward to the memory of climbing back onto the sun warmed rock. I'm told I was swimming exactly as fast as I possibly could.

We kept a base camp of sorts at the lake while we spent the free days we had climbing the peaks surrounding the lakes' bowl. While we

were eating lunch on Scotchman Number Two on the second day, a trio of eagles gradually moved our way. It became apparent that two males were vying with each other for the female. They continued to move closer, until they were literally wheeling right around the peak, five yards from the ledge where we were taking shelter from the wind. The battle appeared to be over when one

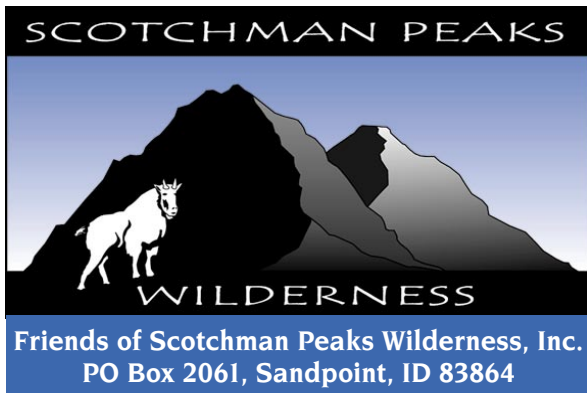
of the males soared away, but as the other two flew back toward Bull Lake, the third swooped down to continue the saga. We watched until the three were lost in the distance.

On the descent from Number Two we glissaded the slope back to the lake, sliding the 1600 feet or so to level ground. We took separate routes down, each vaguely aware of the other while we dealt with our own tumbles and very nearly uncontrollable speed. The lake was waiting at the bottom again. We each leaped in a few more times before packing up the next day. Every time I see this photo I immediately picture the bubbles

swirling around my head after my plunge through the ice.



**Jumping Pete Flash**  
Photo courtesy Richard Fuller



## 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, Inc. Detach & Mail to the address above.

### Board Members:

#### CHAIRMAN:

Phil Hough, *Sagle, Idaho*  
(208) 255-2780 • [nowhere\\_man97@hotmail.com](mailto:nowhere_man97@hotmail.com)

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