



## 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  
Layout and design: Sandy Compton

## A-wolverine hunting we will go . . . (But what will we do if we actually *catch* one?)



**This hardy band set up a bait station in search of wolverines in January. (l to r, FSPW vols Dan Simmons, Jim Mellen, Ann Wimberley and John Harbuck; Idaho Fish and Game personnel Lacy Robinson and Michael Lucid; and FSPW vols Neil Wimberley, Sandii Mellen, Deb Hunsicker and Sandy Compton)**

Photo by Phil Hough

The Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness are into mustelids in a big way this winter, mustelids being that contingent of animals that is loosely referred to as the weasel family. The weasel is actually one of the tiniest members of this large group of carnivores that includes otters, mink, fishers and badgers as well as the focus of several FSPW events this winter: the wolverine.

For those wishing to learn about wolverines on a purely intellectual level, FSPW is bringing wolverine lover and expert Doug Chadwick to Troy, Trout Creek and Sandpoint to give presentations on these elusive and mythic creatures. Chadwick is the author of *The Wolverine Way* and a leading expert on the wolverine. He earned his M.S. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Montana, conducted research on mountain goats in the Crown of the Continent ecosystem throughout the 1970's and published the definitive work *A Beast the Color of Winter* in 1983. Since, he has become enamored of wolverines, another altitude-loving native of Montana and Idaho that depends of solitude and snowpack in part to survive.

A number of FSPW volunteers have had opportunity to learn about wolverines on a more practical level this winter, as they have assisted Idaho Fish

*Continued on page 11*



## Message From the Chair

### We salute our volunteers!

Like many organizations, the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness was first formed and led by volunteers. Although we have grown and now have part time staff we are still volunteer-driven and perhaps depend on our volunteers more now than

ever before. Volunteers are the very heartbeat of all our activities and outreach. With help from dedicated, passionate volunteers we continue to reach more and more people, growing our group of supporters and base of support.

**You can't buy this hat . . . but you can earn one.**

Some volunteers plan or help us put on events for our supporters or for the general public. Other times, our volunteers help out at display tables at fairs and festivals, talk to the public, hand out maps and answer questions. Some volunteers lead hikes or find themselves picking up a Pulaski and using backcountry skills to clear trail. Others share their skills in writing, photography, and design or data management. Fortunately, the diversity of our volunteers matches our many and varied needs.

So, perhaps it is ironic that we have found a "one size fits all" way of rewarding our volunteers! We are proud to announce a new way of recognizing our volunteers. In addition to the "over the top volunteer" feature articles in our newsletter and on top of the certificates and plaques we hand out at our state of the Scotchmans and summer picnics, we now have a specially-designed "volunteer" hat, featuring a "follow me" on the back (a special nod to our outstanding hiker leaders) and "will work for wilderness" on the side, very visible at that table or booth.

You cannot buy these hats; you must earn them by becoming a volunteer. And while we hope that these hats will be incentive enough for more of you to step forward as volunteers, we want to start by recognizing some of the outstanding volunteers who have done so much to bring us this far! In February we handed out hats to our most dedicated volunteer corps.

For a complete list of the inaugural volunteers who have earned their hats, please visit our website. If you would like to find out how to earn your own hat send us an email to [info@scotchmanpeaks.org](mailto:info@scotchmanpeaks.org) and let us know you would like to be a volunteer. We'll match a need with your skill and interests!

**Phil Hough**

## The Future Looks Bright

**March 4:** Phil Hough will make a presentation to the National Association of Active and Retired Federal Employees at the Elks Club in Ponderay.

**March 8:** FSPW Volunteers will have a table at the Radical Reels Film Festival at the Panida Theater in Sandpoint.

**March 9:** FSPW Volunteers will have a table at the Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce Business Showcase at the Bonner County Fair Grounds, 2 to 7 pm.

**March 10-13:** Phil Hough and Sandy Compton will attend the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada.

**March 13:** The StoryTelling Company, sponsored by Friends of Scotchman Peaks, will be held at Di Luna's at 207 Cedar in Sandpoint. 6 p.m.

**March 17, 18 and 19:** Doug Chadwick, author of *The Wolverine Way*, will present on his favorite mustelid in Sandpoint (March 17, 6 p.m., East Bonner County Library), Trout Creek (March 18, 7 p.m., Trout Creek School) and Troy (March 19, 5:00 p.m. The Hot Club). **(See story on page 1)** Admission free, but bring a nonperishable food item for the local food bank and FSPW will deliver.

**April 10:** The StoryTelling Company, sponsored by Friends of Scotchman Peaks, will be held at Ivano's at First and Pine in Sandpoint. 6 p.m.

**April 13:** Phil Hough and Deb Hunsicker will make a presentation about their time on the Continental Divide Trail at the Sandpoint Community Hall at 6pm. Admission is free of charge, donations accepted to benefit FSPW and Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society.

**April 15:** FSPW will have a table at the International Wildlife Film Festival at the Panida in Sandpoint. Films begin at 7:30.

**April 22 and 23:** Earthday Weekend. Friday, April 22, FSPW will participate in the Sandpoint Earthday celebration at the Sandpoint Events Center. Earthday cofounder and wilderness advocate Doug Scott will speak at the Sandpoint event. Saturday, April 23, FSPW will participate in the Bonners Ferry and Coeur d' Alene Earthday events.

**April 25:** FSPW board member Sarah Lundstrum will give a presentation at the Lewis & Clark County Library in Helena.

**April 28 to May 1:** FSPW staffers and volunteers will attend the Montana Wilderness Association meeting in Bozeman.

**May 4:** Molly Kieran, Lincoln County Coordinator, will make an FSPW presentation to the Red Hats of the Yaak.

**May 12:** Phil Hough and Sandy Compton will make a presentation to the Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce

**May 20 – 22:** FSPW staff will attend Wild Idaho at Redfish Lake Lodge in Stanley Basin.

**May 31:** The annual State of the Scotchmans meeting will be at the Community Hall in Sandpoint



## Over the Top Volunteers

### Judy Hutchins: A Friend from the beginning

By Sandy Compton

The first time I ever climbed Scotchman Peak, it was with our over-the-top volunteer for this issue, Judy Hutchins. If we had encountered law enforcement officers that day, we might have gotten our blood tested, for we spent much of the ascent with our noses stuck in bear grass blooms and ended up looking as if we might have been snorting some illegal substance or another.

In spite of the fact that the white powder was just pollen, we did get high that day, in a manner of speaking, topping out on Scotchman after ascertaining that no two bear grass blooms smell exactly the same.

That was a few years before Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness budded and began to bloom, but Judy was involved in wild country issues long before FSPW was born. In fact, Judy was one of the signers of a letter to Congressman Pat Williams from Sanders County residents — “back when Montana had two Representatives,” she recalls — urging that the Scotchman Peaks be designated as wilderness. It came very close to happening, but Ronald Reagan pocket vetoed the 1982 bill in an election year maneuver.

Judy is a Western woman with a touch of the east built in. She grew up on a pig farm in Fruita, Colorado — “We finished out 250 hogs a year,” she says — and then underwent a bit of culture shock when she entered a private high school in New York City. After finishing high school in New York, she went to the University of Michigan to study wildlife biology. Between her sophomore and junior years, though, she attended a required field camp at Yellow Bay on Flathead Lake. The only reason she went back to Michigan after that fateful trip was to pack up her things. At age 19 in the early 1970s, she moved with her boyfriend at the time to a tiny town in Western Montana — Heron — that just happened to be across the Clark Fork river from the proposed Scotchman Peaks wilderness.

After finishing her biology degree at University of Montana in Missoula — with botany as a second major — Judy moved to Heron full time and has been there ever since. She eventually moved onto a piece of land she owned with her brothers just west of the community and began building a house — which continues to evolve still.

After her graduation from U of M, she worked five years for the Forest Service, three of them as the first certified female timber cruiser on the Cabinet District. “That experience — working for the Forest Service — exposed me to people

all over,” she says. “I got into a huge network, met Cesar (Hernandez) and Bob and Lou Springer.”

Hernandez and the Springers were then and are still involved in preservation and environmental issues. Judy’s background in life sciences drew her in that direction, too. Since that time, she has participated in many different organizations that are focused on keeping the world as pristine as possible, including the now-defunct Panhandle Environmental Alliance, Cabinet Resource Group, Rock Creek Alliance, Clark Fork Coalition and Green Mountain Conservation District.

Her election to the Conservation District is one of her favorite memories, when she filed for election about an hour before the deadline, catching an otherwise relatively conservative board by surprise. She was elected and served four years.

She believes in and participates in political activism. She once put together a campaign that caught Williams’ attention, and helped secure the Trout Creek watershed in Sanders County against road building. The consequence is that the drainage still is one of very few roadless and naturally intact drainages in Montana. She saw it then as a potential source of baseline information to be used in managing watersheds, and that is now exactly what it has become.

She also had the gratification of meeting a former Williams aide — at her mother’s funeral — who told her that, years ago, Williams secured additional protection for the Ross Creek Cedars and surrounding lands after a conversation with her. It was the first she had heard of that.

Heron has become home, but Judy still lives in the larger world. “I’m called to the high country,” she says, “to rock and ice.” In spite of a propensity for altitude sickness, she has trekked in some of the most remote and high-altitude areas of the planet, including the Canadian Rockies, Himalayas, Karakorum and in Patagonia.

How long has she been involved in FSPW? “I was at the first formative meetings,” she says, “including the first organizational meeting in Noxon with Ernie Scherzer and some other folks and another meeting at Jan Griffitt’s house.”

On top of being a long-time supporter and Friend, Judy has been a volunteer hike leader and a gracious hostess to FSPW, volunteering her Heron home as a meeting place last summer to provide a venue for the film-makers from Muhlenberg College to do a concentrated evening of interviews. Her view to the Scotchmans, including the peak upon which we had pollinated ourselves with beargrass, made it a perfect spot for the gathering.



**FSPW volunteer Judy Hutchins has hiked wilderness all over the planet.**

Photo courtesy Judy Hutchins



## From the Top

What a busy winter for FSPW and so many choices of events! Plein Air just keeps on giving — pictures still hang in local galleries, the show in Lewiston with the premier of the Wildman video “En Plein Air”, the Wildman video showing here. The unexpected but very successful mix of wilderness and mountain biking at the packed Laughing Dog opening as the strong reached out a helping hand.

The Wildlife film festival in Libby with another chance to provide community support through food bank donations. Learning about a little-known but really cool animal and then a few others from the photos. The newsletter practically wrote itself this issue. The volunteer hats are fun but the real reward is the chance to strap on snow shoes or muddy boots and walk out and enjoy this most beautiful area. Definitely worth working to keep it as it is.

**Ann Wimberley**

## Along the Trail

**January 5:** Sandy Compton made a presentation to the Sandpoint Rotary Club.

**January 14:** An opening reception for an art exhibit featuring paintings and sculpture inspired by the 2009 and 2010 Extreme Plein Air hikes was held at Lewis and Clark State College in Lewiston, Idaho. (See story, this page)

**January 30 and 31:** FSPW had a table at the Banff Mountain Film Festival in Coeur d’ Alene.

**February 1:** Doug Ferrell made a well-received presentation to the Plains Grange meeting

**February 4:** An opening reception for a photo display from the 2010 Secret Scotchmans Photo tour was held at the new Laughing Dog Brewery tap room. A number of photos were sold to benefit FSPW and Team Laughing Dog’s effort for the Race Across America for Autism. (See story, page 5)

**February 11:** The International Wildlife Film Festival, sponsored by FSPW, was held at the Little Theater in Libby. The new volunteer hats made their debut and many items were collected for the Libby Food Pantry. (See story, page 5)

**February 16:** FSPW staffers Phil Hough, Molly Kieran and Sandy Compton, along with a number of FSPW volunteers, attended a Historic Preservation Awareness Workshop at the Kootenai National Forest Supervisor’s Office in Libby.

**February 20:** *En Plein Air*, the film from Wildman Pictures, was shown at the Little Panida in Sandpoint, along with a short film from Montana Wilderness Association. The new volunteer hats made their debut in Sandpoint.

## Extreme Plein Air art in Lewiston

### Wild art show in Lewiston draws crowds and attention for the Scotchmans

July in the Scotchman Peaks went to visit January in Lewiston, Idaho, in the form of art produced or inspired by the Scotchman Peaks wilderness. January 14, the art of Aaron Johnson, Jared Shear and David Herbold, who all undertook the 2010 Extreme Plein Air hike sponsored by Friends of Scotchman



Peaks Wilderness, went on display in Lewiston, in the recently re-opened Lewis and Clark State College Center for Arts and History (CAH). 240-plus visitors came to the opening night to view the work of painters Johnson and Shear and sculptor Herbold, which filled the main gallery and overflowed into several smaller spaces.

Running continuously in the background was the film *En Plein Air*, a 22-minute movie about the creative process overlaid on the place in which the artists found their inspiration. *En Plein Air*, shot, produced, directed and edited by youthful Wildman Pictures, was filmed in the Scotchmans during the Extreme Plein Air trek. Wildman partners Joe Foster, Jake Glass and Matt Stauble are from Connecticut and attended college at Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania. CAH director Lisa Jones, programming and exhibition coordinator Ellen Vieth, development coordinator Angie Weiland and office specialist Sarah Reaves were all present at the gallery to see that all went well during this first show in the newly remodeled center.

“We like to bring exhibitions like this to the Center,” Jones said, “because they are multidimensional. Here we have sculpture, film and painting; several different interpretations of the same scenes in different mediums. It gives the ordinary person a chance to experience art in several different ways.”

The public responded well to the show. Not only did FSPW sign up some more Friends, each of the artists sold at least one piece on opening night.

Attending the opening reception for Friends of Scotchman Peaks were program coordinator Sandy Compton, board member Neil Wimberley and newsletter editor Ann Wimberley, as well as Friend and fellow painter Diana Moses Botkin.

To view pictures of the show, visit our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/ScotchmanPeaks](http://www.facebook.com/ScotchmanPeaks)

**It’s your chance to learn Indesign, Photoshop and Acrobat Pro from a professional!  
Become a FSPW newsletter volunteer!  
Contact [sandy@scotchmanpeaks.org](mailto:sandy@scotchmanpeaks.org)**



## Laughing Dog opens new tap room Feb. 4 with FSPW and RAAM events

On February 4, the new Laughing Dog Brewing tap room opened with a triple celebration. It was the grand opening of the room and a joint fund raiser for Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness and Team Laughing Dog, the bicycle team that will ride in the Race Across America (RAAM) in June to raise money for autism research and education.



If this seems like an odd combination, consider that Team Laughing Dog and FSPW are blessed with mutual volunteers. FSPW treasurer Jacob Styer and merchandise manager Jim Mellen are both part of Team Laughing Dog. Styer is one of the four primary riders in the race, a 3,000 mile 24/7 jaunt from California to Maryland; and Mellen is an alternate rider.

As part of the grand opening at Laughing Dog, Mellen organized a silent auction featuring the photographs taken by a group who undertook a hike in the "Secret Scotchmans" last summer that doubled as a photo workshop led by volunteer pro photographer and Team Laughing Dog Rider Al Lemire. Proceeds from the auction, including the sale of two handmade martini glasses donated by Thomas Ward, were split between TLD and FSPW.

Sandii Mellen, Jim Mellen, Cary Vogel, Maria Trujillo-Vogel, Joa Harrison and Todd Shepard all donated prints.

## 2010 Summer photo contest.

### First Place, Microcosms Category



"No Fear" by Deb Hunsicker (Second place: Angel Potts-Bopp, Third place: Deb Hunsicker)

FSPW has furthered their support of Team Laughing Dog by providing sweatshirts emblazoned with the design at left for the team to wear on their journey across America. Other Team Laughing Dog members include riders Mel Dick and Wayne Pignolet, alternate rider Mike Murray and support team members Chris Bier, Jake Zmrhal, Dave Sturgis, Denise Alveari, Karen Scott, Kirk Johnson, Landy Hauk, Brian Anderson, Marty Stitsel, Dennis Luce, David Barth and honorary team member Jackson Barth, for whom the whole team has been put together. Jackson has autism.

To help out Team Laughing Dog go to [www.teamlaughingdog.com/donate-sponsor](http://www.teamlaughingdog.com/donate-sponsor)

## Films for food in Libby Feb. 11

### By Molly Kieran

A good turnout for the International Wildlife Film Festival in Libby, Montana, meant lots of food for the Libby Food Pantry. The February 11 event brought about 90 people out on a rainy night to watch some great films on wildlife; *Clash of Bears and Wolves in Yellowstone*; *Wild Flathead*, which dealt with Waterton National Park in Canada just above Glacier National Park; and a new 10 minute video put together by council members of the Montana Wilderness Association.

Friends of the Scotchman Peaks Wilderness and other local folks contributed 162 pounds of food to the Pantry. With high unemployment in our area this is a much-appreciated boost to our food stock.



*Congratulations to some special volunteers from Lincoln County who were honored at the Libby film festival and received a very special volunteer hat (See page 2). They are, from left to right, Brain Baxter, Renée Rose, Charlie Clough, Bill Martin, Molly Kieran and Don Clark.*



## Birds of the Scotchmans

### Spring is a Word

by Jon Isacoff

Spring is around the corner. According to the calendar, spring will be about three weeks away from as you read this. According to nature, though, spring is a long ways off, and the higher up Scotchman Peak you go, the longer that way is. If you look at the latitude of the Scotchmans – about 50-60 miles south of Canada, most migrants are still barely entering into the warmer, much more insect-abundant southern reaches of the Gem State, following the bugs north in their own due time.

To be perfectly honest, late winter/early spring is one of the worst out of times of the year for birding. It's neither "here," nor "there." Interesting winter visitors are slowly creeping out the region, hardly noticed. But new spring arrivals won't come in force till May or June. It's a fun time to give it one last go with the snowshoes or cross-country skis and enjoy that mountain snow. But what if you *really* want to see some birds? Well, there are always the local non-migrants: Chickadees, Nuthatches, Woodpeckers, and Hawks of various types. And, there actually is a type of bird that is most active in February and March: Owls.

Owls are attracting mates or in some cases, already nest-building or even incubating eggs at this time. There is a lot of hooting and screeching going on. This is the best time of year



**Great Horned Owl**

Photo by Randy Beacham,  
[www.randybeacham.photoshelter.com](http://www.randybeacham.photoshelter.com)

to see a typically nocturnal bird on a foggy, cold morning, when the light level is still very low. Great Horned Owls are already paired up and often easily seen sitting together like oversized love birds in still-leafless deciduous trees. Great Horneds are the earliest egg-incubators in North America, laying their eggs any time between New Year's and early March. Though, like most Owls, they hunt by night, they have no predators and fear nothing. So roosting out in the open on a dimly lit day is no worry for them.

At the opposite end of the size spectrum, Northern Pygmy Owls are most frequently seen by day at this time of the year. They often will perch on the top of trees or on dead branches. Look for a brown fluffy grapefruit, which is about their size and shape. Though not typical in the Scotchmans area, Short-eared Owls will hunt in nearby wide-open field country till an hour or two — or even more — after sunrise at this time of year.

Some Red-winged blackbirds will have come back by now, particularly the males, which can make quite a racket on a sunny early spring morning. Ducks, Geese, and Swans will make their annual move through the Lake Pend Oreille system. Common Loons are always about around the Lake and most Americans will never see a Loon except on a Sierra Club greeting card. So take it in and enjoy one of the many luxuries of life in and near the Scotchmans.

## Scotchman Natives

### Skunk cabbage

By Valle Novak

On an early March day, intrepid hikers may find themselves switching from snowshoes to boots as the terrain changes from snow to clear and back again. Suddenly a familiar scent fills the air and someone may say "smells like the skunks are awake!" But savvy folk know that a marsh is nearby and the "fragrance" is that of skunk cabbage.

Sure enough, a small swamp will soon disclose the unique bright yellow blooms of *Lysichitum americanum*, literally growing up through patches of snow. The showy "flowers" or bracts (spathes) surround a fleshy spadix, looking much like an Arum or Calla lily (Araceae) which is actually the skunk cabbage's family.



**Skunk cabbage (*Lysichitum americanum*), found in swampy areas in many places in and near the Scotchman Peaks, blooms in spring.**

Photo by Marilyn George

The blooms precede the large, green, oblong basal leaves which surround them for a time, and then disappear to leave only the bright greenery that lasts through summer. And name notwithstanding, you are NOT going to want to make coleslaw with this "cabbage"!

The roots and stalks do indeed provide food for bear and elk, but the leaves contain long sharp crystals of calcium oxalate which can, according to Edie Kinucan\*, "become embedded in the mucous membranes and cause intense irritation and burning."

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## Creatures of the Scotchmans

### Bighorn Sheep (*Ovis canadensis*)

By Doug Ferrell

Bighorn sheep are easily recognized by the large, thick, curling horns in mature males. The horns of a large male can curl more than 360 degrees around and weigh up to 30 pounds, as much as the rest of the bones in his body. Females' horns are much smaller and gently curved. Both sexes have brown or grey colored fur and white rumps.

Historically Bighorn sheep were widespread throughout Western North America and down into Mexico. Most estimates place historical populations between one and two million. Today's population is less than 10 percent of levels from a few hundred years ago, due to habitat loss, over hunting and diseases spread by domestic sheep.

Sheep numbers are higher today than their low point around 1900, but the animals remain vulnerable to a host of problems. Just this past winter several hundred Bighorns died in Montana, mostly from pneumonia. Even herds that are healthy grow slowly, as females typically do not conceive until they are around five years of age; then one and rarely two young are born per year.

The young are born in remote rocky areas to minimize problems from predators like coyotes, lions, wolves and eagles. Newborns are precocial and can follow their mothers very soon after birth. They are weaned in four to five months. Bighorns are quite social and congregate in groups, though the sexes stay apart until the rut begins in late October. Slow motion film footage of males clashing shows the tremendous power and danger of this competition. Males do not defend territory, but battle over access to females. Combat can last as long as 24 hours, with an average of five clashes per hour.

Bighorns have remarkably good eyesight which allows them to judge distances accurately in cliff jumping and locating footholds. They are also capable of observing humans and other predators as much as a mile away. If you have ever seen a mountain sheep up close, you will remember the way their eyes bulge way out on the sides of the head, thus affording an almost 360 degree view of their surroundings. I had a big ewe walk right up to me in a high mountain meadow years ago. She was trying to get my scent but the air was moving from her to me. She paced back and forth, sniffing the air and working her way closer. I got a good smell of her rank scent before she snorted and whirled away, after she finally figured out how undesirable I was.

Bighorns are capable of grazing on grasses and forbs as well as browsing on leaves and buds, and will spend most of the warm months up in the high country. Sheep seem to love gazing out from high places, like many of us wilderness lovers. They often go up rocky ridges way past where there is



**Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep**

Photo by Randy Beacham, [www.randybeacham.photoshelter.com](http://www.randybeacham.photoshelter.com)

anything to eat. In late fall they move to lower elevations. Unlike the mountain goats that stay up in the high country and feed all winter on the steep and windblown ridges, sheep seek out lower and more sheltered areas. In spring and fall you can sometimes see them in the Scotchmans from the highway, if you look carefully. One good place to look is in the cliffs just above Bull Lake. If they are not moving around they can be very difficult to spot, as they blend in amazingly well.

## Where in the world is Monte?



**Send us your picture dressed in Scotchman gear and you may see yourself in the newsletter. The first will be hard to beat: Tom Woodward of Hope, Idaho on a sunny Antarctica day in December 2010.**

Photo by Annie Woodward



## Trail Talk: Trail(s) 101 — An overview of the Scotchman Peaks trails

By **Sandy Compton**

Although there are several Trails #101 around the nation, including Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia, Tonto National Forest in Arizona and our nearer neighbor, Helena National Forest in Montana, there is no Trail #101 in the proposed Scotchman Peaks Wilderness. But, this trails “primer” for the Scotchman Peaks speaks to an opportunity for FSPW volunteers to attend a field version of Trails 101 in the coming summer season, where they can learn all about pulaskis and even earn one of our cool new volunteer hats (see page 2).

There are a dozen-and-a-half “official” trails in the Scotchman Peaks. Of these, most lead into the Scotchmans, but few go *through* the proposed wilderness. Most run in and come to an end somewhere out in the wild, and sometimes, it’s hard to tell just where they end.

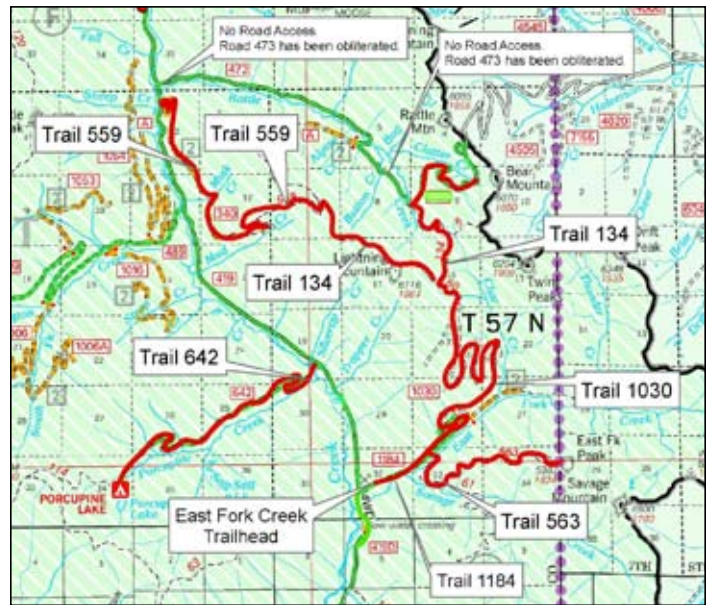
Trails penetrate from both sides of the proposed wilderness, but most give out when they encounter the rugged central portion of the Scotchmans, specifically the serrated divides between Lightning Creek, the Bull River and Lake Creek drainages, and the East and West Forks of Blue Creek. The ridge between Scotchman and Scotchman Two, dividing Lightning Creek and the West Fork of Blue Creek has no trail across it. Approaching this rugged bit of glaciated Belt Series stone from the west are Goat Peak Trail # 35, Morris Creek Trail # 132, Regal Creek Trail # 556, East Fork Creek Trail # 212 and East Fork Peak Trail # 563; and Scotchman Peak Trail #65 runs up the south end to Scotchman Peak

From the east side, the trail stopper is the divide between Ross Creek, which drains into Lake Creek and, thence, the Kootenai River; and both forks of Blue Creek, which drains into the Clark Fork south of the wilderness.

Leading into the wilderness from the east are Spar Peak Trail #342, Little Spar Lake Trail #143, Ross Creek Trail #142, South Fork Ross Creek Trail #321 and Hamilton Gulch Trail # 1019. In addition, Trail #513 is spawned by Spar Peak Trail #342 and runs east along the Spar Peak ridge towards Mount Vernon.

With the exception of Trail #513, all of these trails point fairly directly toward either the East Fork or West Fork of Blue Creek, but none lead across a ridge into that watershed. Interestingly, there are no maintained trails in either fork of Blue Creek.

The trails that run “through” the wilderness are the Pillick Ridge/Star Peak complex, a collection of treads in the south-east corner of the Scotchmans. Big Eddie Trail #998, Pillick Ridge Trail #1036, Star Gulch Trail #1016, Napoleon Gulch Trail #1035 and Dry Creek Trail #1020 form a web that centers on Star Peak Lookout and connects the Bull River and Clark Fork River valleys. An unconnected trail near these is Blacktail Creek Trail #997, which begins near the Clark Fork River and ends in the Blacktail canyon — a long ways short of Pillick Ridge.



**Portions of these trails in upper Lightning Creek will be the focus of a summer 2011 USFS-FSPW cooperative workday.**

At 11 miles, Pillick Ridge Trail #1036 is the longest *maintained* trail in the Scotchmans, but in the opposite, northwestern corner of the proposed wilderness is a large series of what were until recently *unmaintained* trails that center on Lightning Mountain. Beginning from Lightning Creek Road #419, Lightning Mountain Trail #559 led once to the top of its namesake mountain where it intersected Trails #60 and #134. Trail #60 led southwest to a connection with East Fork Creek Trail #212. Trail #134 spawned Trail #5, which led to a point on the divide between Cliff Creek, a tributary to Lake Creek and the Kootenai River, and East Fork Creek. Trail #134 connected with what used to be Rattle Creek Road #473. After heavy flood damage in 2006, this road has been converted to a non-motorized trail, Rattle Creek Trail #473.

Another unmaintained trail in that area is Savage Creek Trail #617, which branched off from East Fork Peak Trail #563 and headed generally toward Scotchman Two before quitting . . . a long way short of the peak.

The good news for trail lovers is that the Forest Service has begun to reclaim some of these trails. Last summer, Idaho Panhandle National Forests crews brushed out four miles of #559. Brush cutting also started on #134 from upper Rattle Creek Road to what is now #1030, formerly #60. Three miles were accomplished.

Friends of Scotchman Peaks volunteers participated in two very successful trail work projects last year — a single day on Scotchman Peak Trail #65 and three days over two weekends that concentrated on the Star Peak/Pillick Ridge complex.

*Continued next page*





## The Winter 2011 Hike Series

| Hike date                          | Exertion Rating | Destination/ Hike Name        | Leader(s)             | Description and contact info  |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 3/5/10                             | S+              | Troy Mine Vent/ Mount Vernon  | Sandii Mellen         | <b>Contact info: 208-265-5261 or <a href="mailto:jimnsandii@gmail.com">jimnsandii@gmail.com</a></b><br>This is a great XC ski, with wonderful views of Bull Lake and the Cabinet Mountains. It climbs steadily up on an old gated road past a mine vent from the Troy mine. Skis are required, (Skins/ snowshoes will be needed in some places). This will be an all day trip and everyone should be prepared for it with layered clothing, food and water. We will go as far as everyone is willing to go. <b>Everyone should be prepared for any weather conditions, with adequate clothing, food, water, headlamps, skins for skis or snowshoes to change in to. Level of difficulty, "Very difficult."</b><br>Round trip, 12 miles. Elevation gain 2,000 to 3,000 feet. |
| 3/19/11                            | S               | Star Peak                     | Jacob Styer           | <b>Contact info: <a href="mailto:jacob@scotchmanpeaks.org">jacob@scotchmanpeaks.org</a></b><br>This snowshoe is quite strenuous and we will probably need every bit of winter sunlight to gain the summit and return to our cars before dark. We will be sticking to the main summer trail for the first 2/3 of the hike, but will probably need to use our off trail route finding skills to reach the summit of Star Peak.<br>Round trip: 10 miles ±. Elevation gain 4140 feet.   |
| 3/26/11                            | S               | Goat Mountain Hop             | Jim Mellen            | <b>Contact info: 208-265-5261 or <a href="mailto:jimnsandii@gmail.com">jimnsandii@gmail.com</a></b><br>This will be the 5th annual Goat Mountain Hop. Gaining 4,000 feet vertical, this is one of the steepest trails in the region. Although you don't have to be crazy to sign up, it does help.<br>Round trip: 7 miles; Elevation gain: 4,000 ±  |
| 4/2/11                             | E/M             | Tracking Hike near Ross Creek | Brian Baxter          | <b>Contact info: 406-291-2154 or <a href="mailto:b_baxter53@yahoo.com">b_baxter53@yahoo.com</a></b><br>Join us for a day of studying winter trailcraft along one of the major wildlife corridors of the border of the proposed Scotchman Peaks Wilderness. Strap on your snowshoes and head out to observe tracks, trails and sign of some of the diverse species of wildlife with local wildlife researcher Brian P. Baxter. Please dress in appropriate layers for this lower elevation riparian area hike, and bring lunch, water, cameras and curiosity. Generally a less than moderately difficult hike, keep in mind if weather dictates snowshoe travel, this can take a bit of energy. This is an all-day outing. Size is limited                                   |
| 4/15/11*<br>* °This is a new date! | S               | Goat Mountain Redux           | John Harbuck          | <b>Contact info: 208-263-9894 or <a href="mailto:harbuck@norlight.org">harbuck@norlight.org</a></b><br>This mountain is so good, we have to climb it twice. Gaining 4,000 feet vertical, this is one of the steepest trails in the region. Although you don't have to be crazy to sign up, it does help. Dare you to do it twice.<br>Round trip: 7 miles; Elevation gain: 4,000 ±   |
| 4/30/11                            | S               | Scotchman Peak                | Jim and Sandii Mellen | <b>Contact info: 208-265-5261 or <a href="mailto:jimnsandii@gmail.com">jimnsandii@gmail.com</a></b><br>Climb the tallest peak in the Scotchmans and Bonner County in the snow! Snowshoes, skis or snowboards are all great options for this extremely strenuous but rewarding trip. This will be the 7th annual April climb and several hikers have done this trip multiple times. Round trip, 12 miles. Elevation gain, 3700 feet.   |

### From previous page: Trails 101

FSPW staff have been working this winter with all three ranger districts to identify trail maintenance projects to collaborate on this coming summer, and the formerly abandoned complex in the northern reaches of Lightning Creek will be most likely the one to benefit from a collaboration on the Sandpoint District, where Trails and Recreation director Mary Ann Hamilton has applied for money to complete Trail #559 to connect with Trail #134, and to finish #134 from the end of #1030 to the junction with #559. A potential work weekend is slated for late June.

Both the Cabinet and Three Rivers Districts on the Kootenai National Forest will plan trail maintenance days for Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness volunteers; two days in July on the Cabinet District, and a single day in August on Three Rivers District. Exact dates and project locations will be posted in the upcoming Peak Experience as well as on our website and Facebook page. If you can't wait to volunteer (and earn one of those cool hats), contact [sandy@scotchmanpeaks.org](mailto:sandy@scotchmanpeaks.org)

## Take your camera for a winter walk!

FSPW has a full half-dozen hikes between March 1 and April 30. March and April are some of the best times to snowshoe or cross-country ski in the Scotchmans. As the winter wears out and spring comes on, snowpack in higher elevations settles and solidifies. Though not always the case, going is often easier in the last weeks of snowpack. To learn more or sign up for a hike, visit <http://www.scotchmanpeaks.org/hiking/current-hiking-schedule/>

The second annual FSPW winter photography contest also continues through the end of the last hike. We have a simplified format this year, with two basic categories: Winter Critters (including people and pets) and Winter Wonders (including scenic shots, macros and other creative compositions.) All participants receive a Scotchman Peaks map bandana, and the best three photos from each category will receive Scotchman Peaks swag. Best overall winter picture will be professionally framed for the photographer. For further information on format and submission, visit <http://www.scotchmanpeaks.org/hiking/put-your-cameras-in-your-packs/>





## Scotchman Rocks

### Reading the Rocks: More clues from the Rock Record

By Mark D. McFaddan, Ph.D.

Few individuals have shown the passion for wild places that Scottish-born naturalist John Muir carried throughout his life. However, for one so fascinated with the geology of the west and the processes that have shaped the land through geologic time, he was surprisingly pessimistic about ever unraveling the secrets of the rock record. When describing a view of the lower Grand Canyon nearly a century ago, Muir referred to the well-exposed layered rocks as “a grand page of mountain manuscript that I would gladly give my life to be able to read. How vast it seems, how short human life when we happen to think of it, and how little we may learn, however hard we try!”

Although we may have a hard time matching the commitment and passion of the icon, we can certainly be more optimistic about understanding our geologic past through the clues left in the rocks! Rather than view the strata as the unintelligible, decayed rubble of past landscapes, we can regard the layers of sedimentary rocks as the diary of planet Earth. We simply need to look deeper than our edge-wise view of the pages of this grand “manuscript” and literally dig into the details. The ground rules for the interpretation of the clues in the rocks – especially sedimentary rocks – have been established over centuries of study, and a brief review of their essence is a great place to begin.

Pioneers in the interpretation of the rock record such as Nicholas Steno in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Italy provided the groundwork needed for the study of layered rocks or strata. Steno formulated the Principle of Original Horizontality, stating that the effects of gravity cause sediment in particular to be deposited in generally horizontal layers. The important implication is that tilted layers of rock have been deformed during mountain-building processes long after their formation. The eastward-tilted layers of Belt rocks along the north shore of Lake Pend Oreille and the Clark Fork River are great examples. Geologists have learned over time that the Principle of Original Horizontality is a good starting point, and that comparison to modern depositional environments will reveal distinct clues in the rocks if the sediment was initially deposited on a slope. Because slope environments are rather rare in comparison with flat floodplains, lake floors, and ocean basins, horizontally deposited layers are in the vast majority throughout Earth history.

Steno’s second great contribution to understanding strata was framed as the Law of Superposition. Simply stated, the idea is that in any sequence of layered rocks, the oldest layers are at



**Quartzite at the base of the bed is too hard to be scratched by the hammer; the finer-grained upper part of the layer is easily scratched.**

Photo by Mark McFaddan

comprise the Idaho Cabinet Range and the Scotchman Peaks area began their existence as water-deposited sediments on a rather flat landscape approximately 1.5 to 1.4 billion years ago. Features still preserved in the sediment indicate that the depositional surface was essentially horizontal for most of the layers. Weathering and erosion of older rocks supplied the clastic sediment that was eventually lithified back into tens of thousands of feet of solid rock through the processes of deposition, compaction, and cementation. Prominent layering is the hallmark of such sedimentary rocks and is one of the most easily visible clues to the style of deposition.

The Law of Superposition places the oldest rocks in our layered sequence at the bottom of the pile (other evidence indicates their absolute ages), and works even if the layers are somewhat tilted by later mountain building events. But how can we tell if the layers have been completely overturned during mountain building? One great clue is the size grading within each bed from coarse grains at the base to finer grains near the top of each layer: it is the same characteristic that makes the parting of layers so prominent in sedimentary rock outcrops worldwide.

A simple scratch test on the outcrop will tell the tale and confirm that the grading is “up” in a bed and not upside-down. The coarser sands at the base of a bed have been welded by heat and pressure into tremendously hard and durable quartzite; a steel streak is left by the hammer on the tough lower part of the bed. The darker upper part of the bed is much softer silt and clay; it scratches easily. The story in the layers is now coming together: sediment deposition by water on a nearly flat surface, layer by layer of sediment accumulation, and tilting (but not overturning) by mountain-building long after sediment was turned to stone. Now that we have concluded that the pages of our rock “manuscript” are in order, it is time to look at the fine print for more details on the depositional setting.

**Next up: even more clues written in stone!**

the bottom and the youngest layers are at the top. The concept certainly seems obvious to us in today’s world, but was quite controversial to many readers because it was clearly stating that the Earth had a history; the landscape had evolved through time and had not always looked as it does today. It was a short journey of logic to later invoke massive amounts of geologic time to explain the changes evident in the rocks.

These first guiding principles provide a solid foundation for reading our local layered rocks. Rocks of the Belt-Purcell Supergroup that



### From page 1: Wolverines

and Game employees Michael Lucid and Lacey Robinson in asking certain places around the Scotchmans to reveal any mustelid secrets they might hold. Lucid and Robinson, with the help of volunteers, set traps and bait stations in the proposed wilderness this winter, looking to discover whether there are any wolverines in residence. Sunday, January 23, nine folks from FSPW — Phil Hough, Deb Hunsicker, Neil and Ann Wimberley, Jim and Sandii Mellen, Dan Simmons, John Harbuck and Sandy Compton — accompanied the biologists and set up a bait station designed to attract wolverines, capture some of their DNA and take their photos.

With a beaver carcass as bait and a household sponge soaked with *something* that Sandii Mellen confessed to making her eyes water, the station set on January 23 did yield some interesting results when FSPW volunteers Holly Clements, Mary Franzel, Sandii Mellen and Nadine Roberts returned to the bait station on February 7 with Sandy Compton. Something had been munching on the beaver, and the station's "collection system," gun brushes attached to the bait tree in two circles around the bole six inches apart just below the beaver, had gathered a collection of hairs for DNA analysis. On another tree about 11 feet from the bait, Robinson had set up an infra-red camera that is triggered by motion. The camera readout showed that it had taken a number of pictures (almost 500), so it was with great excitement that the data card was retrieved.

After replacing the data card and changing out the gun brushes, the volunteers came out of the woods with hair samples



**A fisher is "captured" by a remote motion-sensing digital camera somewhere in the Scotchmans.**

**Photo courtesy Idaho Department of Fish and Game**

secured. The data card would eventually reveal that a large mustelid had indeed been partaking of the beaver, but it was not a wolverine. Several hundred pictures of a large and rather well-fed fisher were on the card. Interestingly enough, the fisher had not been to the bait station until the day before the "refresher" team went in to check the station.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of February, another group, including Franzel, Clements, Hough, Hunsicker and Compton returned to the station and retrieved the camera and the rest of the "evidence." This time, the camera data — some 1400 pictures — showed that the fisher had returned numerous times, eventually absconding with the remains of the beaver after working diligently and intently for four days to that purpose.

In the meantime, FSPW treasurer Jacob Styer and volunteer Jake Ostman helped Lucid and Robinson set another bait station in another drainage in the Scotchmans. Results from that station showed that another cousin of the wolverine had stopped by for a visit, but it was the even smaller pine marten.

Lucid was still optimistic of finding the primary critter. "No wolverine yet, but that's not surprising — we've seen a lot of sign and I bet we'll have some *gulo* pics soon."

So, part of the group at Chadwick's presentations will be more than a little interested to hear what he has to say about the creature they have been helping to "hunt" this winter

in the snowy confines of the Scotchmans.

*Doug Chadwick will be in Sandpoint on March 17 at 6 p.m. in the Rude Girls Room at East Bonner County Library; Trout Creek on March 18 at 7 p.m. in the Trout Creek School; and Troy on March 19 at 5:00 p.m. at The Hot Club on 3rd Street. Please bring a non-perishable food item for the local food bank*

### From page 6: Skunk cabbage

While the *Peterson Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants* says the small young leaves can be used in soups or stews - and agrees that the mature greens should not be eaten (except after thorough drying) - I figure why would anyone want to anyway?

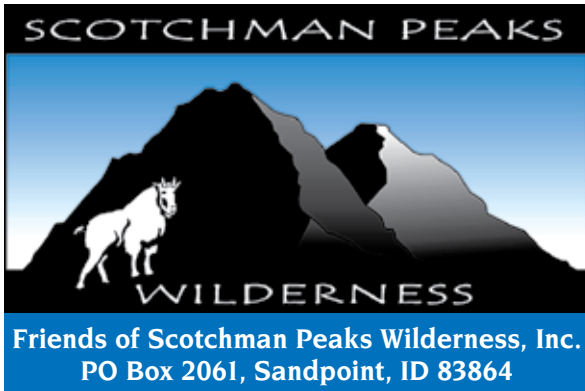
Kinucan's *Wild Wildflowers of the West* states that the Makah Indians would roast the stalks on hot rocks, and the spadix buried and steamed by building a fire on top, but that the plant was never "highly prized as food by Indians."

The leaves however, were used as a poultice on cuts and swellings and as "waxed paper" for lining baskets and steaming pits.

Both books agree that the rootstock can be dried and ground for "a pleasant, cocoa like flour" (per Peterson), but again, unless you're a hermit or a starving pioneer, the time and effort would seem moot.

To me, the bright and pretty appearance of skunk cabbage is simply a harbinger of Spring, and I have always delighted in its welcoming patches of color in an otherwise dismal patch of boggy ground.

*\* The late Edith S. Kinucan and her husband Kenneth were longtime managers of the University of Idaho's former Field Campus at Clark Fork where they provided classes for the public on a number of environmental subjects. Both had extensive and prestigious backgrounds as teachers, naturalists, and ecologists. (Edith's book: ISBN 0-9615444.1 4).*



## 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.

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