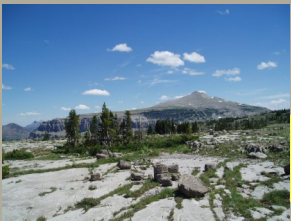


Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex

2018 Newsletter

VOLUME 27



Invitation from your lead Ranger

On Saturday, April 14, 10 am – 3 pm at the Lincoln Community Hall in Lincoln, Montana, we are hosting the annual “LAC” or Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex public meeting. For those not familiar with “LAC” it stands for Limits of Acceptable Change. The public meeting has been occurring for more than 30 years! And the LAC data period for the most recent 5-year cycle, as well as a remarkable 30 year cycle will be shared and discussed. **ALL of you interested in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex are key for us as managers in staying current on land and social concerns, wilderness issues, and just overall input. Your feedback on agenda topics, areas of interest, what is working or what is not remains appreciated!** The Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex managers (Forest Service representatives from the Lolo, Helena—Lewis and Clark, and Flathead National Forests, and Fish, Wildlife & Parks representatives from Regions 1, 2 and 4) are planning to participate.

- Mike Munoz Ranger, RMRD

SATURDAY, April 14th

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Lincoln Community Hall

The Lincoln Community Hall is located near the middle of town, along Highway 200.



Rocky Mountain District Ranger Mike Munoz

Invitation - continued...

By Mike Munoz, RMRD



The Bob Marshall Wilderness complex is comprised of the Bob Marshall, Great Bear and Scapegoat designated wildernesses and also has ties with adjacent lands that provide the access and trailheads to the wilderness. We the managers really value the opportunity to meet and talk with wilderness users, supporters and advocates.

2017/2018 – We're having some real winter, especially in the month of February. As a result, there are some very high avalanche conditions; and likely downfall from past fire events, accumulation of snow and multiple wind events. We expect there could be some avalanche debris out there that you may find before any of the Forest Service crews, partners or volunteers. Please share information immediately if you encounter an area with lots of downfall, debris, and/or wash outs from high water events. The extra eyes and communication are very important.

For those not able to participate in this year's BMWC Public Meeting, we will be posting the agenda and any meeting notes, on both the Helena—Lewis and Clark, and Flathead Forest WEB pages under Special Places following the meeting and will welcome further discussion and/or follow-up.

Topics we have lined up at this time include:

- ◇ Fish, Wildlife & Parks representatives' updates/ongoing projects.
- ◇ Information on Wilderness Stewardship Performance and what is going on this coming season and how it ties to the original LAC monitoring.
- ◇ National Stewardship Trails Act update.
- ◇ Snow surveys' data from around the complex, for February and March, 2018.
- ◇ Planned projects and priorities for 2018 (Forest Service and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks)
- ◇ Sharing current planning projects that may occur in the future.
- ◇ Break out time with representatives from each Ranger District regarding LAC and other issues.
- ◇ Presentation on 30 years of information over-lap for both fire events and LAC data regarding trails and camps site inventories.

I have the privilege to facilitate this upcoming meeting now that Deb Mucklow has retired. Her involvement and leadership with the complex managers and public remains sorely missed. She had been at it in the complex since 1995. You can say we're the last of the bi-millennial Rangers, with my time here in the complex since 1999. As always, our time together will allow us to celebrate accomplishments, recognize challenges, and plan on future accomplishments this coming season. And most importantly, allow us to come to know one another and the shared passion we share for all wildlands. On behalf of the complex managers and partners, we look forward to the continued dialog and challenging discussions surrounding all things Wilderness.

We look forward to hearing what you have to share. You're welcome to contact me by phone at 406.466.5341, ext. 121 and/or by email, mamunoz@fs.fed.us, as well as stop by, to share agenda requests. Travel well and good day.

Changes to 2018 Mountain Goat Seasons

by Neil Anderson, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks



The Fish and Wildlife Commission, in the February 15 season setting meeting, approved a proposal to eliminate hunting of mountain goats in several hunting districts in the Bob Marshall complex. The proposal was submitted by area biologist, Jessy Coltrane, in response to continued declines in goat populations. Starting in 2018 no licenses for mountain goats will be issued in Hunting Districts 131, 132, 134, 141 and 151.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission also passed regulations making it illegal to harvest a nanny with a kid, or a nanny in a group with kids in FWP regions 1, 2 and 4. This law is similar to an existing law in British Columbia that helped to reduce nanny and kid mortality from hunting.

Both the closure of hunting in several districts and the law limiting nanny harvest are in response to declining native mountain goat populations in the Bob Marshall Wilderness and other areas of western Montana. More information on the status of mountain goats in the Bob Marshall and Montana is available on the FWP web site

(<http://fwp.mt.gov/regions/rl/>)

And

(<http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/diseasesAndResearch/research/MountainGoat/default.html>).

For questions about this and other wildlife related topics in the Bob Marshall contact the Kalispell area biologist, Jessy Coltrane (406 751-4584) or the Region 1 wildlife manager, Neil Anderson (406 751-4585).



Photo Credit: Bruce L. Smith
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (retired)



“Among North American native big game species, mountain goats (*Oreamnos americanus*) present many challenges for wildlife management and conservation. They live in remote and harsh environments where traditional monitoring techniques are challenging; they often occur in small isolated populations which are, by definition, more difficult to monitor and face increased risk of declines; and they exhibit life history characteristics that make them particularly susceptible to over-harvest and slow to recover from population declines (Toweill et al. 2004, Festa-Bianchet and Côté 2008).”

Status of Montana's mountain goats: A synthesis of management data (1960–2015) and field biologists' perspectives
Final report: 1 May 2017

Crossing the Finish Line – Westslope Cutthroat Conservation in the South Fork Flathead

by Matt Boyer; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

It was nearly 20 years ago

that biologists with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the Forest Service began planning for a collaborative landscape scale conservation effort that would take 10 years to implement but would result in protection of the largest and most intact populations of native westslope cutthroat trout remaining in Montana. The biologists and conservation geneticists who initially described and understood the resource issue at hand were ahead of their time, the managers and administrators who cautiously listened to them and asked the appropriate challenging questions showed strong leadership through the process, and the field staff (consisting of fisheries crews, packers, trail crews, pilots, volunteers) who made this all work on the ground were technically proficient and absolutely dogged. For anyone watching, the project was an example of how agencies and the public can come together to create lasting conservation success stories.



Casey Burns and Mark Pengelly with the Nine Mile pack string assist FWP Fisheries crews transport live westslope cutthroat trout from Danaher Creek for use in restoration efforts in the South Fork Flathead.

Photo courtesy FWP



Angler with westslope cutthroat trout; South Fork Flathead River drainage. Photo courtesy FWP

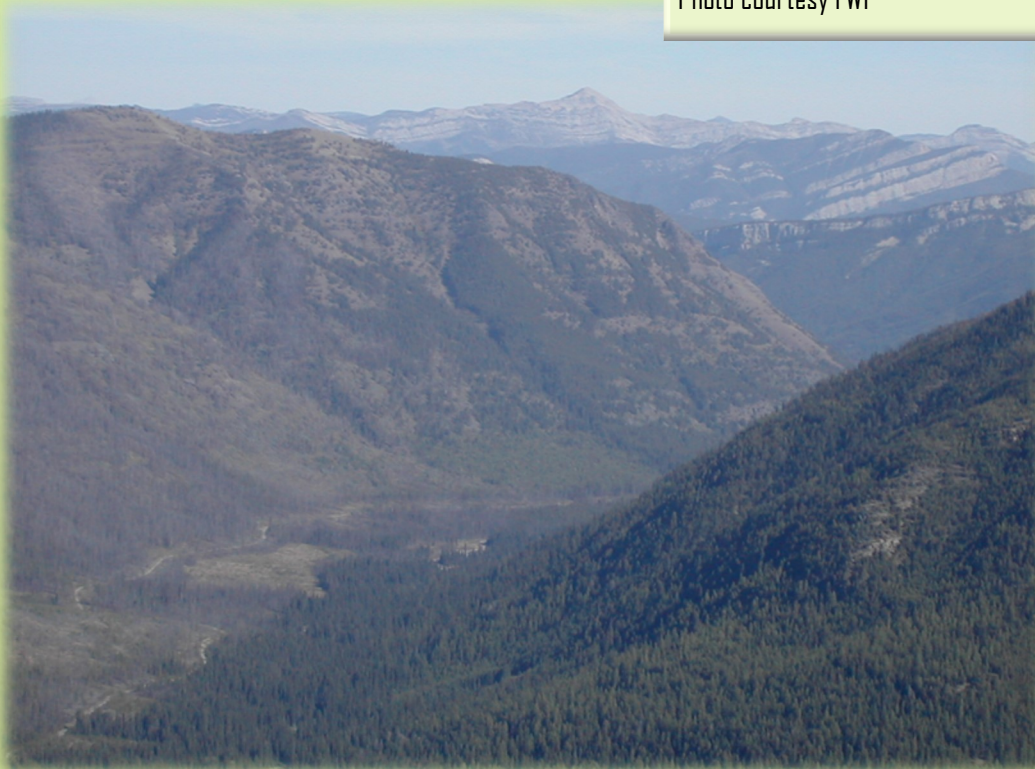
In September 2017, implementation of the project was completed at Sunburst Lake where the piscicide rotenone was used to remove nonnative Yellowstone cutthroat and rainbow trout hybrids. In summer 2018, Sunburst will be stocked with westslope from a nearby genetically pure donor population in the South Fork. In total, the project removed the threat of hybridization from introduced trout in 21 alpine lakes and associated tributaries, thereby securing headwater refugia populations of westslope cutthroat and protecting the world class native trout fishery in the South Fork Flathead River drainage.

Crossing the Finish Line – continued

The use of local, wild sources of fish for westslope cutthroat reintroduction is an important element of this project and represents a significant advancement in our approach to conserving genetic variation in native fish populations. This genetic variability is the raw material for populations to adapt and persist in the face of changing environmental conditions and the conservation hatchery at Sekokini Springs plays an integral role in helping us manage for this species into the future. Last summer we were fortunate to work with Casey Burns and Mark Pengelly of the Nine Mile pack string who helped collect and transport live juvenile westslope from Danaher Creek to the hatchery truck at Benchmark Trailhead where they are delivered and raised to maturity and spawned at Sekokini Springs. These fry then make the journey back to select lakes in the South Fork to reestablish native, self-sustaining fisheries for this species.

A strong science-based justification for action, dedicated agency and public partnerships, and a solid, yet adaptable, implementation plan was key to the success of this project, which serves as a model for future native trout conservation in The Bob and elsewhere in the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem. This work was largely funded by Bonneville Power Administration through the Hungry Horse Mitigation Program and groups such as the Backcountry Horsemen and Trout Unlimited as well as local outfitters and guides provided immense support along the way. We are also extremely grateful for the help and support of Flathead National Forest staff, without which none of this work would have been possible.

Aerial view of Sunburst Lake, Bob Marshall Wilderness.
Photo courtesy FWP



For in depth technical information or project background please contact Fisheries Biologists Sam Bourret (sbourret@mt.gov; 406 751-4556) or Matt Boyer (mboyer@mt.gov; 406 751-4570) or visit the South Fork Flathead westslope cutthroat trout project website (<http://fwp.mt.gov/rl/wctproject/default.html>).

Carmichael Cabin Restoration Project

Seeley Lake Ranger District-Summer 2017

By: Jeremy Watkins, SLRD Trails Specialist

The summer of 2017 saw many successes and challenges for the Seeley Lake Ranger District Wilderness, Trails, and Invasive Species programs. Some of our successes in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex were of the routine variety such as BMWF Volunteer projects on the Hobnail Tom Trail #32, Dry Fork Trail #31, an invasive weeds project around the North Fork Cabin, and annual log out of our Scapegoat Wilderness trails. Our greatest challenge came in the form of the 160,187 acre Rice Ridge Fire, which shut down most activities for a good portion of the summer and fall. One non-routine, highlighted success was the Carmichael Cabin Restoration project.



Early History

Located in the headwaters of the North Fork of the Blackfoot River at the confluence of the North Fork and Cooney Creek, the cabin was originally built in 1921 by the employees of the Carmichael Sheep Company. It was constructed as a supply cache and depot to support the sheep herders who managed their flocks and the packers who supported the herders. The location was chosen because of its proximity to some of the best graze in the area, and many local geographic features in the area are named after herders including: Broadus Creek, Theodore Creek, and Dabrota Creek. Owner James Carmichael died in 1944 resulting in the discontinuation of his sheep ranch, as well as the company's permits for grazing in the area. As a result, the Forest Service found itself in possession of the cabin.

Outfitting

Beginning in the early 1950's through 1967, White Tail Ranch Outfitters owners Howard Copenhaver and "Hobnail" Tom Edwards were issued a special use permit to use the cabin for their outfitting operations. During this period, guests continued the tradition started by the original sheep herders of carving or signing their initials, date, and hunting kill onto the back of the door. The earliest readable entry dates back to 1931. Originally the cabin had only an earthen floor, but the Whitetail Ranch installed a floor constructed of local lodgepole pine joists and dimensional lumber in 1952 (a young Smoke Elser assisted in constructing the "new" floor). After 1967 the Forest Service stopped issuing permits for the use of the cabin, and use completely fell off. By the late 1970's the cabin was in disrepair with all the windows broken out, the stove pipe missing (leaving an open hole in the roof), and the only use being from pack rats.

Carmichael Cabin - continued 2

Administrative Site

In the early 1980's the Forest Service saw the potential of utilizing the cabin as an administrative site, and restoration efforts including replacing the windows, stove, daubing, painting the floor, and repairing the roof occurred in 1984. More recently, Forest Service personnel began to recognize the need for more restoration work. In 2013 preliminary site visit and design were conducted by Seeley Lake District personnel and a historic preservation expert from the Spotted Bear Ranger District (Flathead NF). Work to be conducted included: replacing the front sill log, repairing the foundation, leveling the cabin, replacing the entire floor and sub-structure, oiling the cabin logs, re-glazing the windows, and repairing the daubing. State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) clearance was granted and work was scheduled to be done during the 2016 season. However, due to personnel changes, the work was postponed until 2017.

The 2017 Project

The decision was made to break up the work into two phases with the foundation, floor, and log work being phase I. Phase 2: treating the logs, daubing, window glazing, and re-shingling the roof will be performed in 2019. We also realized that we did not have the technical expertise to perform this historic restoration work on the district, so we reached out to Ian Bardwell and Kibb Mills from the Rocky Mountain Ranger District (Helena-Lewis and Clark NF). The two of them offered their assistance and looked over our current plans and suggested some change to the design. The changes included: putting the cabin onto all new piers made from local stone and mortar (instead of patching and leveling the existing foundation), changing the orientation and spacing of the floor



joists, adding a center beam under the joists for support, and using 1x10 boards instead of OSB for the subfloor (due to the glue in OSB being a rodent attractant). Kibb Mills assisted in compiling a supplies list, and agreed to be on hand as our technical expert for much of the project work. The revised plans were shared with Lolo National Forest Archeologist Sydney Bacon, RI Historic Preservation Team Leader Cathy Bickenheuser, and SHPO. It was determined that the changes were minor enough that a second SHPO clearance letter would not be necessary.

Dates for the project were set for July 11th-August 15th. Kibb Mills and Jeremy Franks came over from the RMRD during one of the pay periods to assist with the technical foundation, log, and flooring work. The rest of the labor would be provided by the SLRD trail crew (Jeremy Watkins, Kevin Bissett, John Leader, and Jacob Lilley), and the SLRD Wilderness Ranger (Patrick Johnson). The RMRD supplied many of the specialty tools for the project, with other tools supplied by the RI Historic Preservation Team.

Carmichael Cabin - continued 3

One large hurdle in this project was the logistics. Carmichael Cabin sits about 18 miles from the North Fork Trailhead, and all the lumber, supplies, tools, gear, food, and stock feed had to be brought in by mule. In all, around 100 mules worth of cargo were packed for the project. The plan for most of the cargo was to pack first into the North Fork Cabin (7 miles), and then bumped the rest of the way into Carmichael. The pack support for this project was truly an "all hands on deck" situation with support from: SLRD packers (Keith Guschausky/Jeremy Watkins), Northern Region Pack Train (Casey Burns/Mark Pengelli), Nez Perce Clearwater NF packers (Mark Horner/Pete Armichardy), the Ninemile Wildland Training Center-Advanced Packing Class (Casey Burns/Mark Pengelli/Laura Johnson-Boudreaux/students), and Kibb Mills.

The work began July 11th with SLRD personnel clearing snags out of the cabin area, repairing the corral, emptying the cabin, removing the old floor, and hauling rocks up from the river for the new foundation piers. The crew was also able to clear all the trails in the area during this hitch. July 24th-August 2nd saw the bulk of the work with the cabin raised and leveled, new concrete footings poured, the foundation piers constructed, the sill log replaced, the new floor constructed, oakum chinking installed where needed, the historic door reinstalled, and several other smaller projects. After two days off in the field, the SLRD personnel sanded/finished the new floor, and put the contents of the cabin back together.



The crew also had time to perform more trail work in the area including brushing and constructing a 50' turnpike.

This project was successful due to our ability to work across not only district boundaries, but Forest boundaries, and with help from the Regional office. We would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to the Rocky Mountain Ranger District (Helena-Lewis and Clark NF), the Moose Creek Ranger District (Nez Perce Clearwater NF), the Region One Historic Preservation Team, the Northern Region Pack Train, the Ninemile Wildland Training Center, and the Spotted Bear Ranger District (Flathead NF). We also had offers of help from the Lincoln Ranger District (Helena-Lewis and Clark NF) and the West Fork Ranger District (Bitterroot NF), but ended up not needing their assistance. Thanks again to everyone who helped make this project a shining light through what turned out to be a very smoky summer.



Special thanks to SLRD Developed Recreation Manager Chad Mullman who previously researched and compiled the historical information from: Lucile Shumate, Laura Spinney, Jim Blackburn, and Jack Dupree

Lincoln Ranger District

by Adam Tew, Lincoln Ranger District

2018 will be another active year in the Scapegoat Wilderness for Lincoln Ranger District as we continue to tackle deferred maintenance projects throughout the district trail system. The bulk of this project work will occur with district crews on Landers Fork Trail #438 and feature in excess of one mile of retread as well as backlogged brushing, cutbacks, and drainage installation. In addition, two failing puncheons in the area will be converted to turnpikes to improve structure longevity and reduce maintenance demands over time. This will improve access to the outfitter camp operating out of Baking Powder Creek which uses Trail #438 to reach its camp and beyond.

Efficient and rapid early season trail clearing will continue to be a priority for Lincoln Ranger District as we seek to conclude log out by the first week of July.

This ambitious goal will be met by a Wilderness trail crew that is heavy with returning seasonal employees and will free even more time to pursue additional deferred maintenance. Trails #427, #484, #480, #483, #481, and more will all receive some degree of maintenance from structure replacement to retread or brushing. Much of this work will be carried out by our partner groups including The Montana Conservation Corps, Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation, and the Nine-Mile pack string, organizations that continue to play a crucial role for Lincoln Ranger District in maintaining our Wilderness trails.



Lincoln - continued

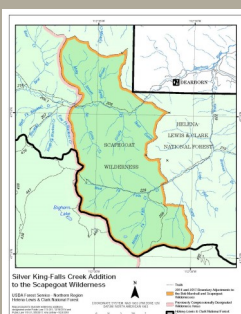
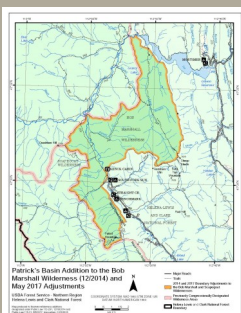
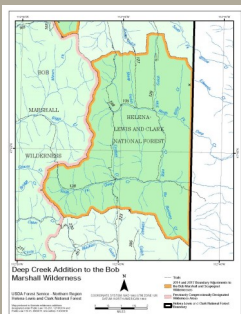
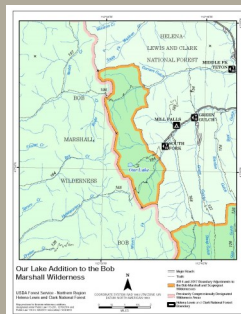
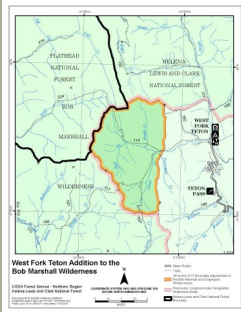
Our Wilderness rangers will remain focused on managing invasive plant species, adding to the prior years' inventories, and applying herbicide or mechanical treatments to reduce known infestations. They will continue to assume a leading role in implementing the Heart Lake restoration project which enters its second year and will feature additional planting units and other treatments to recover impacted sites. Solitude monitoring, visitor contact, and Leave-No-Trace outreach education will comprise the remainder of their duties.



We are particularly excited to partner once again with the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation in hosting a National Trails Day event at Indian Meadows Trailhead. This historically well attended celebration of all things trails will feature Lincoln Ranger District trail crew teaming up with individual volunteers and completing a variety of projects in the area. The work day will be followed by a generous barbeque and general good times. Several Wilderness education outreach opportunities as well as a greeting and address by District Ranger Michael Stansberry fill out the day's events. Please contact The Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation or Lincoln Ranger District at 362-7007 for more information on volunteering for National Trails Day, or how to otherwise get involved.

The Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act

-by Shelby Majors, Rocky Mountain District



"In 2013 Congress passed a bill that designated an additional 67,160 acres of National Forest System lands along the Rocky Mountain Front to Wilderness lands, and included it in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. Those Wilderness areas have been mapped and finalized; those maps are available for you to print off and take with you as you head to the backcountry."

-Helena-Lewis and Clark NF Webpage

These maps are available on the Helena-Lewis and Clark NF webpage under Maps & Publications.

https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd572108.pdf

The Act is available at:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/364>

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 364

To establish the Rocky Mountain Front Conservation Management Area, to designate certain Federal land as wilderness, and to improve the management of noxious weeds in the Lewis and Clark National Forest, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 14, 2013

Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. TESTER) introduced the following bill, which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To establish the Rocky Mountain Front Conservation Management Area, to designate certain Federal land as wilderness, and to improve the management of noxious weeds in the Lewis and Clark National Forest, and for other purposes.

- 1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
- 2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
- 3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**
- 4 This Act may be cited as the "Rocky Mountain Front
- 5 Heritage Act of 2013".



A Day in the Life at Beartop

by Shelly Milburn, Rocky Mountain District Beartop Lookout

0430: It's early July. The blue-black sky of night is already fading to dark blue-green, the color of deep water. I roll over and go back to sleep.

0534: The sun blazes through the eastern windows. This is uncivilized. I turn my back on it.

0600: Madison, my yellow lab, stands on my stomach and flaps her ears vigorously. I finally give up.

0615: Bed made and dog fed, I drink hot cocoa on the porch, listening to the distant howling of wolves. The mountain's shadow shrinks toward me, drawing back from the river.

0700: Check-in time! One by one, the crews on the north end of the district call me with their plans for the day. Trail Crew 1 is working up Lick Creek. Trail Crew 2 plans to continue "banging away" on the Ray Creek trail. One of the wilderness rangers will be checking the camps in the lower North Fork on her way to Pretty Prairie. A volunteer packer calls from Badger Cabin to say he's headed for the trailhead; the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation crew he just dropped off calls in ten minutes later. Between calls, I mix up a batch of bread dough and put it in the sun to rise.

0735: I change into dirty hiking clothes, grab a saw, and jog down the trail. There is a meadow about a mile below the lookout. Madison tears around at top speed while I cut a ten-foot length of firewood from a fallen lodgepole at the edge of the meadow. Balancing it on a leather pad strapped to my shoulder, I haul it back up the mountain.

0840: The bread has doubled in size, so I punch it down and put it back in the sun to rise again. While I eat breakfast, Madison brings me a toy to throw. She retrieves it. I throw it again.

0900: I clean my plate with a dab of water and half a paper towel: dishes done. I throw Madison's toy as far as I can, then do a set of pushups while she retrieves. Repeat, this time doing lunges.



0930: Check the bread. Not ready. Finally tired of fetching, Madison stands on a rock, looking out over the North Fork while I roll out my yoga mat and do a quick flow.

1000: Weather Time! I record the cloud cover, temperature, relative humidity, wind speed and direction. Then I check the bread. It almost resembles an actual loaf, so I turn the oven on and slide the pan in.

1010: Great Falls Dispatch reads the morning fire weather forecast. I run to the radio and write it in my log in case anyone asks later.

A Day in the Life - continued

1015: Project time! Sometimes it's scraping or painting the lookout. Other times I re-glaze the windows or replace a rotten hitching post. Today, I wrestle my sawbuck to the middle of the "porch" and buck up the log I just packed up the mountain, as well as the ones I hauled earlier this week.

1020: Check the bread. Still pale and still soft. Not done. Back to work.

1025: Check the bread again. This time, the loaf sounds hollow when I tap it. I pull it out and flip it onto a wire rack to cool. I cut a thick slice off the end and eat it hot while looking out over the North Fork. Then back to work.

1100: Binocular time! I sit on a stump that some former lookout whittled into a stool, scanning the North Fork for smoke. There hasn't been lightning in weeks, but I still look.

1120: Madison is ready for more eternal, infernal fetching, but I have to finish stacking the firewood in the wood bunk. Throw. Stack. Repeat. Repeat. *Repeat.*

1130: Project finished, I relax onto the bed with some sewing. Propped up by a pile of pillows, I can see most of the North Fork drainage without moving. If I twist around, I can see the rest of it.

1200: Back outside for a brief binocular scan. Then lunch: tuna fish sandwich with baby lettuce from my window garden. Madison sits next to me with a toy in her mouth, waiting.

1215: More infernal fetching, while I stand on a rock and look around.

1230: I do a lap around the tower, looking out. Then more sewing, more looking around.

1300: Binoculars. Then back to sewing and looking around. The dog is finally asleep.

1315: Radio call. The BMWF packer is at the trailhead and headed home. I take a lap. Then back to sewing and looking around.

1330: I take another lap, looking for fires. There aren't any. More sewing, more looking around. Think about what to eat next.

1400: Take weather. Do binoculars. Then more sewing. More looking around. Watch the dog spend ten minutes trying to kill a horsefly.

1430: I take another lap. Then I pick more lettuce and cut up an apple

to make a salad with walnuts, cranberries, a sprinkle of parmesan, and a dash of olive oil.

1500: Binoculars. Sewing. Looking around. Still no fires. I spend an inordinate amount of time locating the precise position of a meadow east of Moonlight peak, because it catches my eye today and I have nothing better to do.

1530: Take a lap. Sew. Look out. Think about what to eat next.

1600: Binoculars. Then I sit by the radio while my crews to check in. Trail Crew Two reports success on Ray creek, and BMWF will be back to camp a little late. Otherwise, uneventful. I wait for the volunteer crew to straggle into camp, and then wish them good night.

1700: Off duty! I roll up my sewing and put it away. I reheat yesterday's pizza in the frying pan. I eat, sitting on my stump while a red-tailed hawk soars below me. Still no fires.

1730: More infernal fetching, while I try to sneak some reading in.

1800: The dog is finally done. I settle down on the couch with my journal. Madison flops across my feet. I continue to glance out the window periodically. Still no fires.

2130: Sunset. The sky is still clear and cloudless, orange into yellow then aquamarine.

2200: Twilight. I turn on my solar lights so I can keep writing.

2230: The brighter colors have set, leaving a thick band of deep-water green all along the horizon with the night-time sky above it. The mountains are black. The full moon, already two hours into the sky, casts enough light that I don't need to bring my own when I step outside to brush my teeth. I crawl into bed, and Madison waits impatiently while I get settled. She leaps up when I give the command, landing squarely on my stomach. "Oof," I grunt. Madison springs to her feet, *woofing* as she tries to figure out what I was barking at. We repeat that process two or three times before I finally manage to convince her that there's no emergency. She spoons up against my side, and we both drift off to sleep. Just another day in paradise.

Beartop Lookout is one of 3 staffed lookouts on the RMRD. Built in 1933 it is an L-4 Cab style located at 8100 feet in the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

In 2018 Shelly will be returning to Beartop for her 7th season and her 20th season as a lookout.

The Second Entry

by S. Matt Counts, Spotted Bear Ranger District

Between 2000 and 2016 459,077 acres have burned in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex.

Many of those acres have seen more than one fire. What makes these areas interesting is the drastic reduction in accumulated litter, underbrush and downed logs as compared to the prefire and after the first burn.

On the Spotted Bear District in the Hodag area that saw the first entry in 2000 and again in 2013 the results are spectacular. There is much more open space. You can now ride a horse off trail. You can see game from farther away. The area is approaching what it must have looked like when Ayers first came through the South Fork in 1898.

We have gotten positive comments from the outfitter community on the acres that have seen the second and third entries.

These are the results that were envisioned when the pioneers of what was then termed Prescribed Natural Fire were looking for when they saw what was possible if fire was allowed to play its natural ecological role on the landscape.

“The data and overlapping maps of large scale and multiple entry fires during the period are proof of the effort and effectiveness of this evolving fire management program implementation.”

David L. Bunnell, National Fire Use Program Manager,
USDA Forest Service, Retired

August 22, 2013 10:55 am



August 24, 2013 11:30 am



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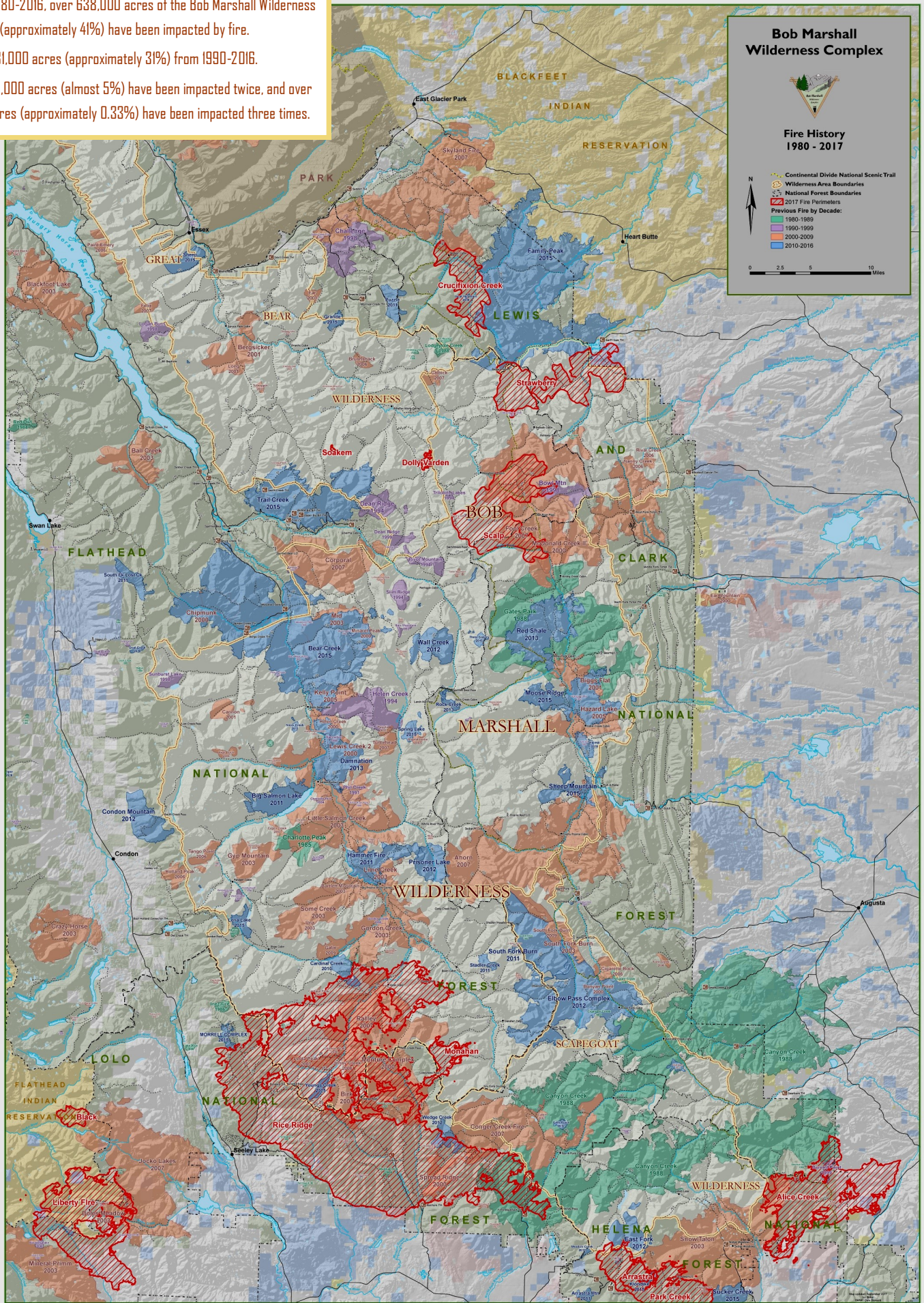
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This is on the hill between Mud Lake and the Salmon Forks Ford Junction, the first fire was the Lewis Creek 2 Fire in 2000 and the second was the 2013 Damnation Fire. The results in reducing the young Lodgepole regeneration and the heavy dead and down is extraordinary.

*From 1980-2016, over 638,000 acres of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex (approximately 41%) have been impacted by fire.

*Over 481,000 acres (approximately 31%) from 1990-2016.

*Over 72,000 acres (almost 5%) have been impacted twice, and over 5,000 acres (approximately 0.33%) have been impacted three times.



River News

by Colter Pence, Hungry Horse-Glacier View Ranger District



Happy Birthday WSRA!

2018 is the 50th anniversary year of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, which was signed into law Oct. 2nd 1968. The 3 Forks of the Flathead Wild and Scenic River, including the wilderness stretches of the Upper Middle Fork and the Upper South Fork, were added to the system in 1976. But did you know that the upper Middle Fork in the now Great Bear Wilderness Area helped inspire the idea of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act? A proposal to dam the upper Middle Fork River in the Spruce Park area (before this was designated wilderness) prompted famous conservationist and University of Montana professor John Craighead to develop an idea to protect some rivers from damming and development, similar to protections for wilderness areas. Now there are 12,734 miles of 208 rivers in 40 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico which are Wild and Scenic Rivers. That is quite a conservation legacy thanks to the upper Middle Fork! Learn more about Wild and Scenic Rivers here: www.rivers.gov and more about the 3 Forks of the Flathead here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/attmain/flathead/specialplaces>



Upper Middle Fork of the Flathead Wild and Scenic River.

Flathead River Comprehensive River Management Plan

The Flathead National Forest, in coordination with Glacier National Park, has begun the process to prepare a Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) for the 3-Forks of the Flathead River.

The river and surrounding lands offer recreational opportunities and access to outstanding resources for a variety of public lands users. The CRMP will address the current status of these resources, outline goals and desired conditions, determine user capacities, and create a monitoring strategy and plan to carry forward. The public is encouraged to contribute to this planning effort that will secure the outstanding remarkable values of the 3-Forks of the Flathead River for future generations. The CRMP will be written to ensure compatibility with the Wilderness Act and wilderness values associated with the sections of the rivers in the Great Bear and Bob Marshall Wilderness Areas.

The 3-Forks of the Flathead was designated a Wild and Scenic River in 1978 and is a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. It encompasses the North Fork of the Flathead from the Canadian border to its confluence with the Middle Fork, the entire Middle Fork, and the South Fork from its headwaters to Hungry Horse Reservoir. The North Fork and the lower Middle Fork form the boundaries between the Flathead National Forest and Glacier National Park. Portions of the Middle and South Forks flow through the Bob Marshall and Great Bear Wilderness Areas. A total of 219 miles of the Flathead River are included in the designation.

For more information, please call Flathead National Forest Recreation Program Manager, Chris Prew at 406-758-3538. Also more info here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/news/flathead/news-events>

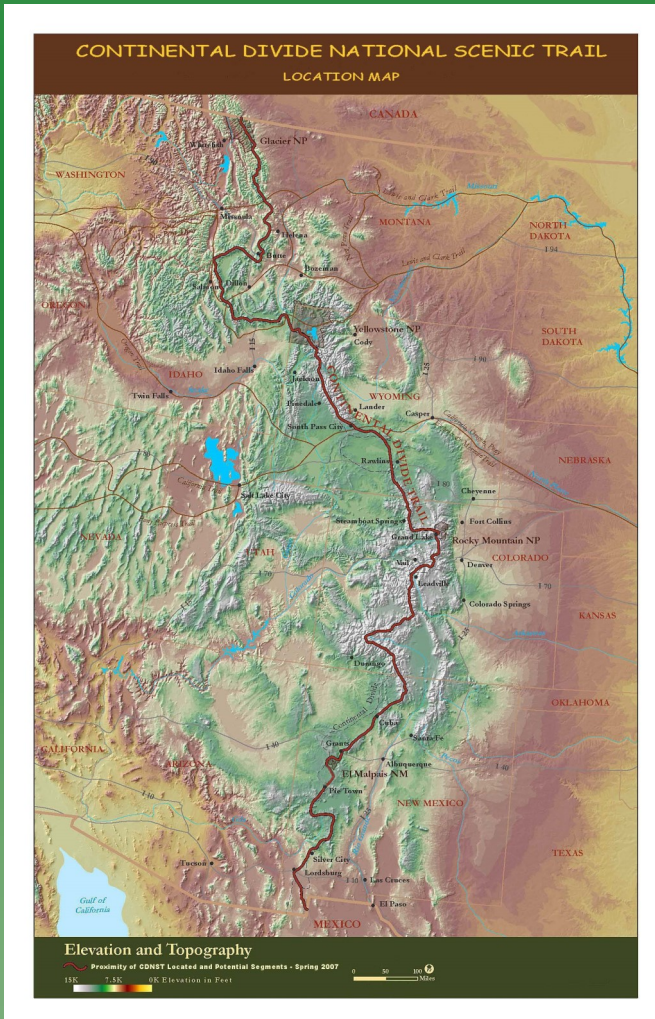
National Trails System Act

Continental Divide Trail

By Colter Pence, Hungry Horse-Glacier View Ranger District



2018 is also the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act, and the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDT) one of the original designated trails under this law. The Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex hosts approximately 211 miles of the CDT (18 miles on FNF, 143 miles on RMRD, and 50 on LRD) The CDT extends from the borders with Mexico and Canada, passing thru iconic western landscapes along the Continental Divide. Travelers on the trail will see the hard work BMWC trail crews and partners have devoted to this trail, including BackCountry Horsemen Chapters, the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation, the Continental Divide Trail Coalition, Montana Conservation Corps, and Montana Wilderness Association. Learn more about the National Trails System Act here: www.trails50.org/



National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act (NTSA)

An Update

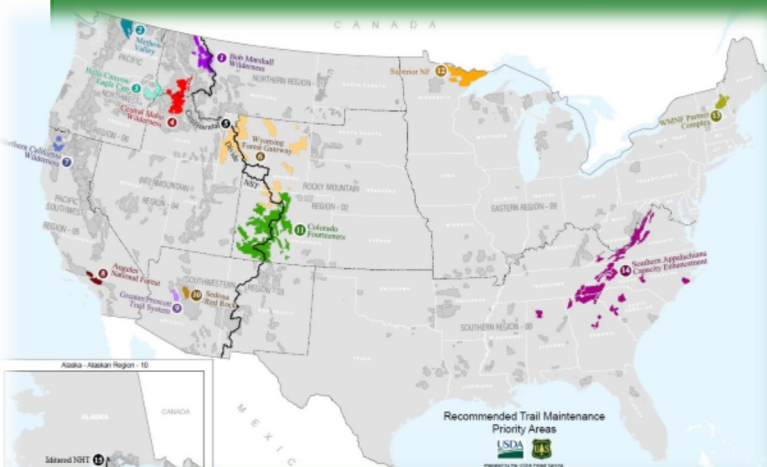
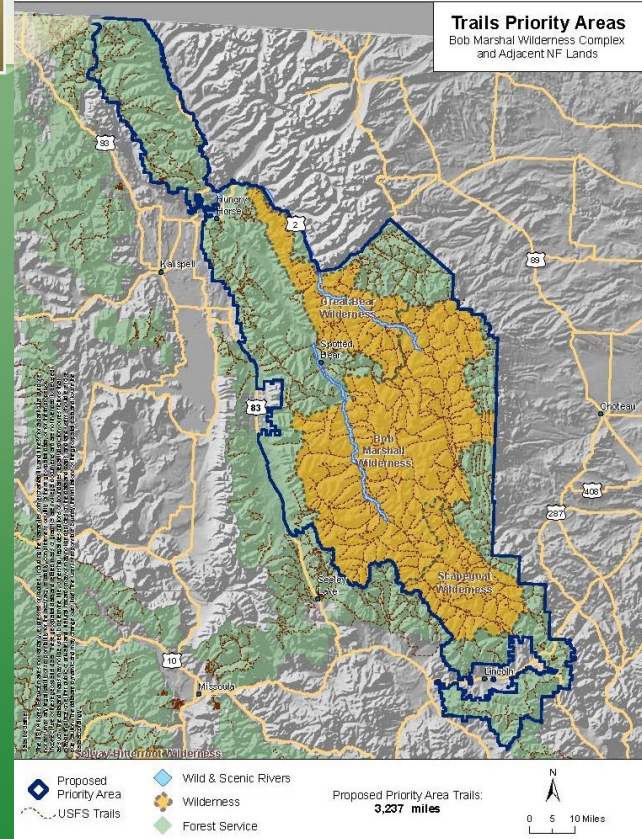
By Mike Munoz, Rocky Mountain Ranger District

As many of you know, the NTSA was signed into law on November 28, 2016, as H.R. 845 in the 114th Congress. And we received word on February 16, 2018, that Secretary Perdue announced the selection of 15 Trail Maintenance Priority areas across the U.S. And the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex and adjacent National Forest System lands submitted by the Northern Region was selected. The Bob area is the only area selected that's entirely within the Northern Region; the Region's other three areas are shared with adjacent Regions.

The selected area sets astride the Continental Divide, including 1,700 trail miles in wilderness and a total of 3,200 miles throughout. The Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex is comprised of the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat and Great Bear Wilderness areas; and administered by three national forests which are the Flathead, Lolo, and Helena – Lewis and Clark NFs.

The NTSA was enacted to create a strategy to significantly increase the role of volunteers and partners in National Forest System trail maintenance and for other purposes. The Act identifies volunteers, partners and outfitter/guides as having important roles in trail maintenance. Requirements of the Act include development and publication of a volunteer /partner trail maintenance strategy; an aim to double trail maintenance by volunteers and partners; exploration and study of approaches to increase trail maintenance, including the use of fire crews and a trail maintenance priority program.

Overall, the Forest Service and most certainly the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex managers hope to use the Act to increase volunteer/partner assistance in trail maintenance; achieve a well-cared for system of trails; provide access to national forests and wilderness areas; help connect people with their public lands; and help generate and foster the next generation of citizen stewards of public lands, especially wild lands such as wilderness.



The trail priority area is the result of input from both partners and the Forest Service. In submitting the area selected, we hope to not only address trail maintenance needs, but also maintenance of trailheads and other facilities that serve as access points and travel ways for all users. In mentioning all users, there are many trails outside of designated wilderness that are critical paths to access wilderness, as well as extraordinary wildlands across the national forests that are enjoyed by a variety of users. The five Ranger Districts comprising the Bob and other National Forests lands, look forward to our future endeavors to increase trail maintenance and other activities across such outstanding landscape.

Social Media

By Colter Pence

Want to stay up to date with information and announcements coming from the 3 national forests that manage the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex? One way is to follow our Facebook pages, where we post information about public meetings, fire updates, and other useful tidbits. Though many of us go to the wilderness to get away from the demands of modern life, our social media sites are a way to stay engaged with your favorite places when you aren't there enjoying the solitude.

Keep an eye out for:

#BobMarshallWildernessComplex

<https://www.facebook.com/HLCNF/>

<https://www.facebook.com/lolonationalforest/>

<https://www.facebook.com/discovertheflathead/>

<https://www.facebook.com/BobMarshallFoundation/>

<https://www.instagram.com/bobmarshallwilderness/>

#LoveTheBob

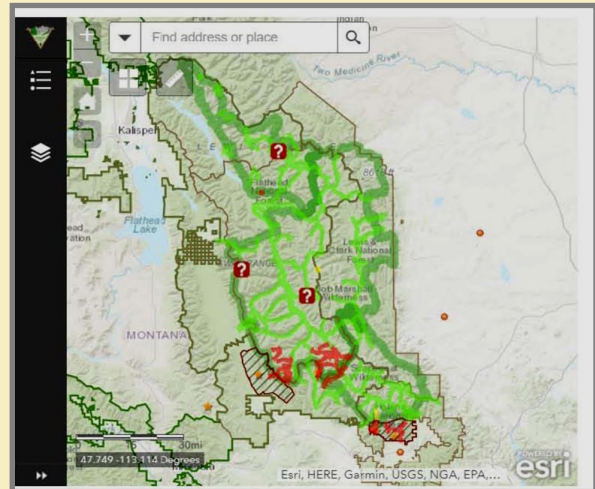


Ivy Baker at Webb Lake Cabin, Lincoln RD, Scape Goat Wilderness while on the 2017 BMWC Managers trip.

BMWC Interactive Planning Map

By BMWF

**Planning a hike or horse adventure in the Bob?
Check the Trail Conditions map on-line at BMWF.org
before you go!**



There are 1700 miles of trail in the Bob; with so many choices, choosing a trail to hike or ride on takes careful planning and Mother Nature is full of uncertainties. The BMWF website now hosts an interactive map that displays trail clearing reports. Bi-weekly updates are made to the map to indicate where crews have recently cleared trails. Also featured on the map are hazards and fire boundaries. This information is added from USFS mapping and official information sources as a helpful guide to areas closed to the public.

To plan your hike go to:

<http://www.bmwf.org/conditions-map/>

Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex

Districts

Hungry Horse RD

(406) 387-3800

District Ranger:

Rob Davies

rdavies@fs.fed.us

Lincoln RD

(406) 362-7000

District Ranger:

Michael Stansberry

mstansberry@fs.fed.us

Rocky Mountain RD

(406) 466-5341

District Ranger:

Mike Munoz

mamunoz@fs.fed.us

Seeley Lake RD

(406) 677-2233

District Ranger:

Rachel Feigley

rfeigley@fs.fed.us

Spotted Bear RD

(406) 758-5376 (summer)

(406) 387-3800 (winter)

District Ranger:

Scott Snelson

ssnelson@fs.fed.us

National Forests

Helena - Lewis and Clark NF

Helena, MT 59602

(406) 449-5201

Forest Supervisor:

Bill Avey

Deputy Forest Supervisor:

Sara Mayben

Flathead NF

Kalispell, MT

(406) 758-5208

Forest Supervisor:

Chip Weber

Lolo NF

Missoula MT

406-329-3750

Forest Supervisor:

Tim Garcia