Engaging Youth

Discover Nature Day on the Monongahela National Forest

Fostering Stewardship

Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards

Raising Awareness

Get Wild Festival in Albuquerque, NM

Celebrating 50 Years of Wilderness

A Report to Forest Service Leadership

December 2014
FOREST SERVICE INVESTMENT AND SUPPORT

In January 2013, Chief Tidwell chartered a Forest Service team to plan and lead the agency’s Wilderness Act 50th commemoration and to coordinate with federal stewardship agencies, Wilderness50, and others. The FSWILD 50th Team exceeded expectations, weaving an agency-wide wilderness element into Forest Service focus areas and programs.

The FSWILD 50th Team

Leanne Martin, Director, Wilderness and Wild Scenic Rivers (WWSR)
Elwood York, Wilderness Program Lead, WWSR
Steve Chesterton, Natural Resources Specialist, WWSR
Randy Welsh, WSR Program Lead, WWSR
Estelle Bowman, Assistant Director, Office of Tribal Relations
Tina Terrell, Director, Job Corps Program (located in Denver)
Tiffany Holloway, Office of Communications
Lincoln Bramwell, Historian, RHVR
Tamberly Conway, Conservation Education
Susan Fox, Director, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute
Connie Myers, Director, Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center
Ralph Swain, R2 Wilderness & Rivers Program Manager
Pete Irvine, Wilderness/Recreation, George Washington-Jefferson NF
Lisa Ronald, U of MT Wilderness Institute/ACNWTC/Wilderness50

The Southwestern Region (R-3), spearheaded by Diane Taliaferro, WWSR Program Manager, showcased the Forest Service as the primary host for the National Wilderness Conference.

The Chief also directed over 1 million dollars to the field to develop and implement activities and projects. Strategically leveraged through partnerships, the funding supported events in the FSWILD 50th three themes:

- **Engage Youth** and underserved communities;
- **Foster Wilderness Stewardship** by better connecting the broad wilderness network; and
- **Raise Awareness** so that more people understand and appreciate wilderness, its values, and its benefits.
Throughout 2014, Forest Service employees commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act by partnering with local and national organizations, groups and individuals — bringing wilderness down from the mountains and into our communities. The Forest Service led or was involved in most of the nearly 850 events held throughout the country.

This report briefly highlights events and honors the thousands of employees and volunteers who empowered themselves and others, letting their love for wilderness shine through in so many amazing ways.

It began on August 23, 2012, with the signing of an MOU charting Wilderness50, a coalition of federal agencies, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, user groups and others. Wilderness50 was registered as a corporation and partnered with the Society for Wilderness Stewardship as a fiscal sponsor for the two-year effort.

The wilderness50.org website spun off wilderness.net to become an invaluable source of information, materials, training and networking for all involved.

The Wilderness50 report is available at:
http://www.wilderness50th.org/documents/50th%20Anniversary%20of%20the%20Wilderness%20Act%20Report.pdf

A 50th anniversary branding iron imaged “wilderness tree cookies” at many events.

Walkin’ for Wilderness in Logan, UT.
ENGAGING YOUTH

Untrammeled: Passing the Wilderness Torch to the Next Generation (27 minute film), Northern Region (R1), Back Country Horsemen of Montana, Bob Marshall Wilderness Outfitters, Wilderness Institute - University of Montana, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center, Montana Wilderness Association, Missoula County Public Schools, Starrett Artists, LCC.

Untrammeled, set in the wilds of Montana, features youth speaking to youth about the importance of wilderness. Untrammeled will be submitted to the 2015 Big Ski Documentary Film Festival and will be outreached for public television broadcasting. Use of the highly acclaimed film in Montana schools with an accompanying curriculum is in the works.

Youth Sign Language Academy, Albuquerque, NM – A Week Long Exploration of Wilderness – Southwestern Region (R3) Conservation Ed, Rocky Mountain Research Station (RMRS), Albuquerque Sign Language Academy, Rio Grande Nature Center, New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, Wildlife Rescue of New Mexico, Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program, and City of Albuquerque.

Wilderness and conservation education were the week-long pursuit for 109 K-9 Albuquerque Sign Language Academy (ASLA) students, who are deaf, hard of hearing, or siblings of deaf students. Activities included rock climbing, creating plaster molds of wildlife tracks, birding and a river ecology walk along the Rio Grande River, as scientists and interpreters shared perspectives of wilderness and Aldo Leopold’s legacy.


Representatives of the Chugach Children’s Forest from Anchorage and rural Alaska staff traveled to the National Wilderness Conference in Albuquerque, NM to share their passion for wilderness with conference participants. The young people spoke at three conference sessions including a session entitled, “Listening to Youth” where CCF youth shared their personal connections to wilderness. Videotapes of the presentations can be shared with wider audiences.
The Future of an Ancient Forest, Siuslaw NF (R-6), Inner City Youth Institute, Portland, OR.

High School Students from the Inner City Youth Institute worked alongside Siuslaw NF staff to remove Tansy ragwort from the Drift Creek Wilderness, the largest stand of old-growth rainforest in the Oregon Coast Range. “Because of experiences like today, I know where I want to go with my life, and I’m not ever going to forget this,” one student shared. “Today was as important for us as it was for them,” said Rob Stenson, Siuslaw Forest trails crew assistant leader. “It’s rewarding to see kids make these connections and to see the meaning behind what we’re doing.”

Pine Valley Wilderness Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), Dixie National Forest (R-4), Southern Utah University, Utah Workforce Services, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah and the Intergovernmental Internship Cooperative.

Spending three weeks working in the Pine Valley Wilderness brought new experiences to local, underserved youth. The crew accomplished trail and fence maintenance and wilderness character monitoring while learning horsemanship skills, cross-cut saw technique, backcountry safety, wilderness first responder skills, and Leave No Trace principles.

Pledging for Future Wilderness Stewardship, San Bernardino and Angeles NFs (R-5), San Bernardino city, local African American and Latino school youth, the Southern California Mountains Foundation.

Over 250 people pledged to be the next generation of wilderness stewards, especially on the San Bernardino National Forest. “Through our signatures, we want our President and the US Forest Service Chief to know that we are happy that so much land in our country is still wild,” stated Lorenzo Bettencourt, age 16. “My hope is that if I help keep the wilderness areas clean, 50 years from now I can bring my grandchildren to see wilderness areas just like I did today.” The 250 signatures were from predominately African American and Latino youth from some of the poorest areas in San Bernardino County. The proclamation is now on display in the Forest Service headquarters for all to view — and maybe pledge themselves!
FOSTERING STEWARDSHIP

The Wilderness Skills Institute, Southern Region (R8), Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS), Appalachian Trail Conservancy, The Wilderness Society (TWS)

The proper use of grip hoists, crosscut saws and other traditional tools; techniques for tool conditioning and building log cribbing and steps; Wilderness First Aid, Leave No Trace and making visitor contacts in the field were the focus of the over 100 local volunteers and FS managers attending this year’s 2-week Wilderness Skills Institute at the Cradle of Forestry Center, NC. The annual Institute celebrated the 50th Anniversary in a big way, concluding with a large public event in downtown Asheville, NC. Over 200 people gathered to enjoy speakers including wilderness historian Doug Scott and Meryl Harrell, Chief of Staff to the USDA Under Secretary. Recognition of wilderness champions, good music and camaraderie rounded out the very successful event.

Pre-Conference Training — Partnerships and Professionalism: The New Paradigm for Wilderness Preservation, a collaboration between the Society for Wilderness Stewardship, National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance, and the interagency Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center, provided more than 120 employees and partners with the individual and collective skills needed to take care of their wilderness areas and explored their role in implementing 2020 Vision.

Celebrating Wilderness on the Ottawa National Forest, Ottawa NF (R-9), the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Conserve School and Ottawa Interpretive Association

The whole idea of the Ottawa National Forest 50th celebration was to reach out to communities beyond the forest boundary – and it worked! Forest Service staff participated in events in the Upper Peninsula and Northern Wisconsin area with a traveling wilderness-theme booth including a mock backcountry campsite and information about Ottawa’s wilderness areas. Over 1,000 direct contacts were made at these events and nearly 4,000 indirect contacts received information about wilderness.

Eastern Oregon Wilderness Passport, Wallowa Whitman, Malheur and Umatilla National Forests (R-6) and National Public Lands Day organization.

Eastern Oregon visitors were treated to a new approach to raising awareness. Wilderness Passports provided historical facts about the Wilderness Act, Leave No Trace information and encouraged visitors to enjoy the seven wildernesses in their area. Creation of the Passport was integrated into local events including wildflower walks, the Peavy Trail work day co-sponsored by the National Public Lands Day organization, and maintaining the “Why I Love My Wilderness” webpage with visitor stories and photos. The Passport project was a huge success reaching hundreds of visitors.
Revisiting the Cradle of Wilderness - White River NF (R-2), Meeker Chamber of Commerce, local Outfitters & Guides.

In 1919, when Forest Service employee Arthur Carhart strongly recommend Trapper’s Lake remain “undeveloped and pristine”, little did he know his recommendation will grow into the idea of wilderness. In September 2014, FS employees joined with others to revisit the site and the spirit, with a panel of wilderness experts offering both historical perspectives and thoughts for the future. Both the 100 invited guests and the over 10,000 people who enjoyed the event via live-stream across America enjoyed the view of Trappers Lake and the Flat Tops Wilderness. The program is now downloadable on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmaHGeO6Nqw

Welcome to Wilderness: Boise, Idaho Airport Display - Boise and Payette NFs (R-4), City of Boise, Boise Airport, Boise State University, The Wilderness Society.

Reaching out to an estimated 200,000 people a month, the 50th Anniversary Wilderness Displays in the Boise International Airport raised wilderness awareness in a big way. A short video feed encouraging viewers to “Put the Wild Back in Your Life” displayed on 15 large flat screens throughout the airport for four months. A large display case was stocked with information about the Wilderness Act, Idaho wildernesses, and traditional wilderness tools. Through images of Idaho’s wildernesses and the 50th Anniversary logo, airport visitors were able to increase their awareness of wilderness, and will hopefully seek a little “Wild” in their lives in the future.

Vallejo Goes Wild! – USFS Region 5, City of Vallejo, Vallejo Community Arts Foundations, and many other agencies and organizations.

On September 3rd, the Visions of the Wild Festival kicked off in downtown Vallejo, CA. The four-day festival was the product of a multi-agency, community, and citizen partnership aimed at celebrating how people interpret the wild, while reaching a diverse urban community. Festival events took place at seven different venues in Vallejo’s historic downtown, an area undergoing a major revival catalyzed by artists and by public-private partnerships. Hundreds of people turned out for the festival, which included author talks, film screenings, field trips, a blues concert, youth and family activities, and four wilderness-themed art exhibits, all embracing the festival theme of “connecting nature, culture, and community.”
Over 1,000 people enjoyed a 50th Celebration at Seeley Lake, MT.

Former Chief Dale Bosworth keynoted the "Inspiring Stewardship" event in downtown Dahlonega, GA.

Superior NF employees had great fun with building Wilderness-themed dioramas with Peeps!

Launching on a 50th kayaking adventure Wambaw Creek Wilderness, SC.

Our connections to Wilderness were explored and expressed through creative dance in Hailey, ID.

Associate Chief Mary Wagner joined employees and partners in the Bald River Gorge Wilderness on September 3, 2014 — the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Wilderness Act.
Events Across America

Wilderness50 on display at Isotopes Park in Albuquerque, NM during a Triple-A professional baseball game.

Chief Tidwell enjoys wilderness in art at "Visions of the Wild", Vallejo, CA.

Sawing wilderness tree cookies at Discover Nature Day, Monongahela NF.

Wilderness Story hour at the Salmon, ID public library.

SCA's urban Baltimore teens at work — and play! — in the Carson City, MO.

Walkin' for Wilderness in Kansas City, MO.
The Next Generation of Wilderness Stewards

From kindergarten to college, every Region is making headway to cultivate the next generation of Wilderness Stewards. Through our interagency efforts at the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center and Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, we leveraged resources to provide meaningful outdoor experiences, and inspire imagination and intellect, among youth and their teachers.

Thirteen *Wilderness Investigations* workshops were attended by 200 teachers reaching over 8,000 students who now know why wilderness is important, whether they ever go there or not, and that they have a responsibility to care for it.

From backyard to backcountry, over 600 Big Brother Big Sister mentors and their matches participated in 31 monthly events lead by 60 university students, through the Outdoor Explorers Mentoring Program. This partnership builds confidence among youth and mentors, and grows leadership skills among university students. It has expanded fourfold since 2011 and demand is still increasing.

*Connecting Culture Camps* brought youth together to learn about each other’s culture, wilderness, and about their responsibilities as stewards, no matter what they grow up to be and do.

The innovative *Interagency Wilderness Fellows Program* hires young, bright, recent college graduates to develop wilderness character monitoring baseline assessment reports. From 2011 to 2014 the program grew to 36 Fellows conducting baseline wilderness character assessments in 63 wildernesses across America!
The Wilderness Society (TWS) launched its 50 conservation projects across the U.S. to honor the 50th Anniversary in early 2014. This nation-wide project employed youth and veterans in 25 states and DC as public land stewards inside and out of wilderness. It also launched TWS’s Partnership with the Corps Network for the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC). Projects included repairing trails and making improvements using traditional tools. This ensured visitor access while maintaining integrity of wilderness. 50 for the 50th successfully completed 40,000 acres of restored landscapes, built over 800 miles of trails, planted 325 acres of trees on public lands and corps members spent 200,000 hours on 21CSC projects.

Examples of Forest Service 50 for the 50th projects include:

The Urban Conservation Training Farm Restoration project, run by the Greening Youth Foundation in partnership with Region 8, engaged Corps members on a neglected farm site 1.5 miles from Atlanta’s University Center. The project’s goal was to rehabilitate the farm and to serve as a conservation training program for underserved youth from inner-city Atlanta neighborhoods.

Heart of Oregon Corps completed trail maintenance projects in the Black Canyon Wilderness on the Ochoco National Forest.
National Wilderness Conference

Over 1,100 people — including more than 100 youth under the age of 25 — representing more than 160 different non-profit organizations and businesses, 12 international/federal/state/city government agencies, over 60 universities and 20 media outlets attended the National Wilderness Conference, October 15-19, 2014, in Albuquerque, NM. The Southwestern Region (R-3) embraced the opportunity as host, contributing the strong land based cultures of the region and Aldo Leopold’s legacy in wilderness protection. Forest Service contributions were significant to the Conference’s success, including hosting the Get Wild Festival, where over 1,400 people experienced field crews demonstrating caving, cooking, Leave No Trace, Wilderness skills trail, cross-cut saw and stock use, and organizing seven pre-conference field trips including hikes and work days, a week long wilderness ranger training, fire workshop and a tour of Leopold’s historic house.

Several thousand pictures from Raymond Watt Photography are now available to anyone on the following FTP site:

ftp://tp.cfc.umt.edu/Special/Ronald/50th/Conference/.

Sera Naegele, James Munoz, and Diane Taliaferro.

Arthur “Butch” Blazer, USDA Deputy Under Secretary with Rue Mapp, founder of Outdoor Afro and Smokey at the Get Wild Festival.

Linda Merigliano and Ralph Swain in Wilderness Ranger Cook-off.

Estelle Bowman, Office of Tribal Relations, Sara James, Gwich’in Tribal Council, and appreciative audience members.

Local youth enjoy the Wilderness Skills Trail.
Job Corps and Wilderness —
Celebrating 50th Anniversaries
Together

2014 was also a milestone 50th Anniversary for the Job Corps, which was established on May 18, 1964. Joining the two commemorations resulted in several very successful projects.

Chief Tidwell and Job Corps Director Tina Terrell show off the Wilderness Legacy award.

A national Wilderness Legacy Award plaque, was designed and produced by the Job Corps students in Collbran, CO, adding new skills to their job development program. The 500 engraved wooden plaques were used to honor and recognize FS 50th champions and partners. Students from Collbran also built two backpack scales for installation at wilderness trailheads. The scales entice wilderness backpackers to weigh their packs and “linger” a little, reading wilderness info at the trailhead kiosk. Several Job Corps Centers helped FS employees and the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance (NWSA) build and install 18 wilderness trailhead kiosks in 11 states (AK, AZ, CA, CO, GA, MT, NC, NV, OR, TN, and VT).
50th Anniversary Products and Publications

Publications included an Interagency Jr. Ranger Guide...

...and a middle school science journal produced by the Cradle of Forestry Interpretive Association.

A 50th anniversary edition of the Wilderness Ranger Cookbook was produced by the Society for Wilderness Stewardship and includes recipes from BLM, FS, NPS and USFWS rangers.

Commemorative playing cards — complete with Leave No Trace Principles — features each of the 52 wildernesses in NM and AZ.

Almost 50,000 updated NWPS maps were distributed at Wilderness 50th events.

Many items were produced with the recognizable 50th logo.

Poudre Wilderness Volunteers (PWV) was one of several groups to produce 50th Anniversary posters.
FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

How do we harness the energy, creativity, and inspiring commitment that made the 50th Wilderness Anniversary so successful to launch sustainable wilderness stewardship into the future? How do we ensure an enduring resource of wilderness?

By forging a unified Vision

Through efforts lead by our interagency wilderness organizations, the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute and the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center, field manager priorities were identified. In direct response, 2020 Vision: Interagency Stewardship Priorities for America’s National Wilderness Preservation System presents inter-agency goals, objectives, and actions to guide collaborative stewardship, help ensure that the System is managed as a system, and inspire new partnerships.

Signed at the National Wilderness Conference, leadership from the four wilderness stewardship agencies — the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service — pledged to strengthen and broaden our wilderness stewardship work.

At the heart of 2020 Vision are three broad themes —

1) Protect Wilderness Resources,
2) Connect People to their Wilderness Heritage,
3) Foster Excellence in Wilderness Leadership and Coordination.

2020 Vision demonstrates our commitment and inspires the field, our sister agencies, partners, and the public to protect, connect, and lead—to keep the promise of America’s National Wilderness Preservation System.

"The richest values of wilderness lie not in the days of Daniel Boone, nor even in the present, but rather in the future.” — Aldo Leopold

Cavan and Brayden Fitzsimmons in the West Yellowstone, MT 4th of July Parade.
From volunteer to Student Conservation Association intern, to Service First FS/BLM employee, Endion Schichtel celebrates the 50th

Happy Birthday Wilderness!

“....to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness.”  - P.L. 88-577, September 3, 1964