

TRAIL BREAK

your report for silent snowsports

Volume 2014, Winter Issue



15 Years of Advocacy Pays off in Yellowstone

15 years of grind-it-out advocacy, 1.1 million public comments and a commitment to never give up regardless of political setbacks has finally paid off for Winter Wildlands Alliance and our partners with the release of a long-term Winter Use Plan that, we believe, achieves our goal of protecting and preserving Yellowstone's magical winter ecosystem while providing sustainable access and a visitor experience worthy of our nation's first national park and most iconic winter sanctuary.

From a Yellowstone National Park that a decade ago looked, smelled and sounded more like a wild west race track than the pristine winter refuge it was set aside to be, the Park has made a remarkable recovery. Fewer vehicles, commercial guiding requirements, and tighter restrictions on noise and emissions have led to a Yellowstone today that is cleaner, quieter, and far better for skiers and snowshoers and for the Park's iconic winter wildlife. With the October release of the final winter use plan to govern snowmobile and snowcoach use, the protections leading to this recovery are set in place for the long haul and ensure future generations can experience the enchantment of Yellowstone's winter season on its own terms.

For the coming winter, Yellowstone will continue to operate under the same interim plan as the past four winters. This

plan allows up to 318 snowmobiles and 78 snowcoaches per day in the park and sets strict noise and emission standards for all over-snow vehicles.

Beginning in winter 2014-15, the new winter use plan will take effect. This plan puts in place even stronger noise and emissions standards and manages over-snow vehicle use through "transportation events." A transportation event is one snowcoach or a group of up to 10 snowmobiles (with a daily average group size not to exceed 7 snowmobiles). 110 transportation events will be allowed each day split among the different Park entrances and no more than 50 events per day can be snowmobile groups.

Another component of the plan is that certain side roads and trails will be set aside for skiing and snowshoeing and all of Yellowstone's winter backcountry areas will be protected for wildlife habitat and for human-powered access.

WWA and our partners worked closely with NPS officials as they proposed and developed this plan and we congratulate Yellowstone National Park on the completion of this plan. We congratulate you, our members and constituents, who insisted on a plan worthy of our nation's most iconic winter sanctuary!

Mark Menlove
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Winter Wildlands Launches New Website

You may have already noticed, but earlier this season as the leaves were changing, Winter Wildlands Alliance changed our online look, launching an entirely new website. While the colors may be the same, navigation, forms, content and the feel of the site have all been updated. The biggest single change, is finally bringing our Snowschool and Backcountry Film Festival programs all under one online 'roof.' Please take a look and let us know what you think. We'll be adding new content, events and blog posts frequently, giving you a good reason to check in with winterwildlands.org on a regular basis. Please send any specific feedback to info@winterwildlands.org

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Birth of the Wasatch Backcountry Alliance



WWA is proud to support the creation of a new grassroots group, the Wasatch Backcountry Alliance, which was formed to provide a unified voice for human powered winter recreation and to protect the unique balance between developed and undeveloped winter recreation in the Central Wasatch Range.

Born of the successful Stop SkiLink and Friends of Flagstaff grassroots movements, Wasatch Backcountry Alliance has more than 700 members in just two months since officially forming as an organization. The group is well on its way to establishing itself as the recognized voice of the Wasatch backcountry community.

"Our goal is to provide a unified voice for human-powered winter users. Not just skiers and snowboarders, but snowshoers, cross-country skiers, winter hikers...even people who go to the ski resorts and still want to be able to look across the mountains and see pristine backcountry," says founding board chair Jamie Kent. "One of our immediate goals is to count the number of backcountry users so we can provide numbers and data to local government agencies when we're advocating for the protection of our remaining undeveloped backcountry."

Find out more about the Wasatch Backcountry Alliance on Facebook and at wasatchbackcountryalliance.com.

MM

WWA Report Shows \$22 Million Economic Impact From Backcountry Winter Recreation in the Teton-West Yellowstone Region

During the 2012-2013 winter season Winter Wildlands Alliance contracted with economist Mark Newcomb of Jackson, WY, to conduct a first-of-its-kind study measuring the economic impact of human-powered winter recreation across an entire landscape. The study found the total direct economic contribution of winter backcountry recreation in the Teton-West Yellowstone Region to be \$22.5 million, \$12 million of which is attributable to visitors. Activities surveyed include backcountry skiing and snowboarding,



cross-country skiing both on and off groomed trails; snow-shoeing; walking/jogging on groomed backcountry trails; and over-snow biking.

The project, funded by a LOR Foundation grant, grew out of the recognition that data, and economic information in particular, are an important element of our advocacy work. We chose this area both because of its prominence as a backcountry skiing mecca, and also for its mix of wilderness and other areas protected for non-motorized recreation. This project, and others like it in the future, help us make the case that WWA members already know well - good land management pays dividends.

To learn more about the project, and read an executive summary or the full report please visit winterwildlands.org.

COB

A New National Monument for Idaho?

Winter Wildlands Alliance staff and members of The Idaho Outdoor Business Council (IOBC) – a statewide coalition of businesses and recreation groups for which WWA serves a leadership role – visited Washington D.C. in November to visit with key land management decision makers and members of the Idaho Congressional delegation. Both groups see great potential for permanent protection of this iconic landscape that retains the current mix of backcountry recreation available there. Beyond support for the idea, we made the trip to share the results of an economic study commissioned by IOBC on the potential economic impact of the proposed Boulder-White Clouds National Monument.

That study, completed by Dr. Don Reading of Ben Johnson Associates, examined several different scenarios for an increase in visitation and associated spending. Total economic contribution from the creation of a national monument is expected to be between \$3.7 million and \$12.3 million annually and to create 47-155 new jobs. We are encouraged by the current momentum to make the Boulder-White Clouds a national monument, and will remain engaged as WWA and through the Idaho Outdoor Business Council to ensure that recreational experiences are prioritized and local communities are positioned to benefit economically.

COB

Winter Wilderness Stewardship Project Helps Protect the Places We Play

On September 28th, National Public Lands Day, WWA and the US Forest Service combined forces to offer a day in the dirt; coordinating some 20 volunteers in two wilderness areas to help protect the places we play. The project included installing more than 30 wilderness boundary markers to create a better backcountry experience for all winter travelers.

The Caribou-Targhee National Forest Service has found that the boundary markers are a huge success in protecting wilderness values and deterring illegal motorized travel into the Jedediah Smith Wilderness and that more boundary markers were needed to complete this project, which was started three years ago.

The wilderness stewardship project is being used as a template for similar projects across the country. WWA looks forward to furthering our partnership with Caribou-Targhee National Forest and to developing similar projects with other national forests. We also offer huge thanks to our sponsoring partners who are dedicated to the success of this project: CLIF Bar, Mountain Khakis, Grand Targhee Resort and Elemental Herbs.

SP



Backcountry Film Festival is On the Road

The Ninth Annual Winter Wildlands Backcountry Film Festival made its world premiere November 1 in Boise, Idaho amidst hoots, hollers and high fives. The film festival is now on the road and will include showings in more than 100 cities around the world.

The ten unique films included in this year's Backcountry Film Festival come from renowned filmmakers who search backcountry corners across the globe to submit their best work, and from grassroots filmmakers who take a video camera out on their weekend excursions and submit their best films.

For tour schedule, ticket and a program information please go to www.backcountryfilmfestival.org.

Shelley Pursell
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Dynafit Goes on Tour With the Backcountry Film Festival

This year expect to see WWA corporate partner Dynafit on hand at selected Backcountry Film Festival locations. As a major sponsor of the 9th Annual Backcountry Film Festival, Dynafit skis, bindings and other items will be up for raffle and included in live auctions, so let the bidding wars begin! In addition to great product support, Dynafit dealers and retailers will be hosting and supporting the tour throughout the US. WWA is thrilled to have Dynafit engaged on multiple levels of the Backcountry Film Festival and with Winter Wildlands. Nothing says "Embrace the UP" like a pair of Dynafit skis.

SP



2013-2014 Film Tour Schedule

*Schedule is subject to change, please visit
backcountryfilmfestival.org for updates.*

Alaska

Gridwood - January 15th hosted by Backcountry Babes at the Sitzmark Bar.

Fairbanks - January 25th hosted by Fairbanks Nordic Center.

Talkeetna - January 25th and March 14th. Hosted by Alaska Quiet Rights Coalition.

Juneau - January 27th and 28th Hosted by Discovery Southeast at Gold Town Nickelodeon Theater.

Homer - February 20th hosted by Alaska Quiet Rights Coalition.

California

Bear Valley - November 30th at Bear Valley Ski Resort.

Nevada City - December 17th at the Nevada Theater. Hosted by Snowlands

Shasta - January 10th hosted by Mt Shasta Nordic and the Fifth Season

Quincy - January 23rd hosted by Feather River College Outdoor Education Program

Berkeley - February 26th Hosted by WWA and ClifBar.

North Lake Tahoe - February 27th Hosted by Alpenglow Sports.

Colorado

Evergreen - November 13th hosted by Mountain Area Land Trust.

Vail - December 5th hosted by Paragon Sports

Golden - December 6th hosted by Colorado Mountain Club.

Boulder - December 12th hosted by Colorado Mountain Club at Neptune's.

Crested Butte - December 13th hosted by High Country Citizens Alliance

Breckenridge - January 12th hosted by Backcountry Babes at Colorado Mountain College.

Denver - January 23rd at the Oriental Theater hosted by Friends of Berthoud Pass.

Steamboat Springs - February 28th at the Chief Theater. Hosted by Yampatika

Idaho

Boise - November 1st at the Egyptian Theatre

Sandpoint - November 23rd at the Panida Theater.

Boise - December 6th at Boise State University hosted by BSU Outdoor Education Program

Salmon - Jan 1st hosted by Salmon Whitewater Park at The Odd Fellows Bakery

Hailey - January 3rd at The Liberty Theater

Sun Valley - January 4th at The NexStage Theater

Driggs - January 16th hosted by Teton Valley Trails and

Pathways at the Wildwood Room

Coeur d Alene - January 17th at the Eagles Club hosted by Idaho Conservation League

Montana

Livingston - November 21st at Timber Trails

West Yellowstone MT, November 26th hosted by Freeheel and Wheel

Butte - December 13th hosted by Butte Public Library.

Great Falls - February 7th hosted by Island Range Chapter of Montana Wilderness

Nevada

Reno - January 22nd at Patagonia. Hosted by Snowlands

New Mexico

Los Alamos - January 30th hosted by Pajaritos Environmental Center

New York

Keene Valley - December 7th at The Mountaineer Shop.

Oregon

Portland - January 9th. Hosted by WWA at KEEN. Raffle to benefit Education Recreation Adventures.

Bend - January 10th. Hosted by WWA at Volcanic Theater Pub.

Eugene - January 19th at Oakshire Brewery. Hosted by Education Recreation Adventures.

Utah

Salt Lake City - January 23rd at Brewvies Cinema Pub

Vermont

Poultney - November 30th at Green Mountain College.

Burlington - December 12th hosted by The Outdoor Gear Exchange.

Washington

Port Angeles - November 16th at Vern Burton hosted by Hurricane Ridge.

Bellevue - November 25th at the Highlands Community Center hosted by Seattle Mountaineers.

Wenatchee - December 5th hosted by El Sendero.

Seattle - January 10th at The Mountaineers

Spokane - January 31st hosted by Inland NW Backcountry Alliance at Lair Auditorium, Spokane Community College.

INTERNATIONAL

Nelson, BC - January 24th hosted by SOLE



The Elephant's Perch, Ketchum Idaho People Powered Sports Specialists

WWA Backcountry Partner, The Elephant's Perch, in Ketchum, Idaho has been a gathering for outdoor enthusiasts in Central Idaho for 37 years. Over four decades of offering quality

service and great gear, owners Bob and Kate Rosso have also supported numerous community causes including WWA's efforts. Through his work with WWA and the Idaho Outdoor Business Council, Bob Rosso has become a leading voice from the business community advocating for protection of the nearby Boulder and White Clouds Mountains. His work on this front has included authoring opinion columns in the Idaho Mountain Express and Idaho Statesman, and visiting Washington, DC to meet with White House officials and Idaho's Congressional delegation to educate them about the importance of protecting special places like the Boulder-White Clouds.

Learn more about The Elephant's Perch online at elephantsperch.com or, better yet, stop in for a visit if you're ever in the Ketchum/Sun Valley area.

MM



Our Backcountry Partner program is a unique partnership program for backcountry-oriented retail stores, guide services, outfitters and other small businesses that support, and want their customers to know they support, Winter Wildlands Alliance's mission of promoting and preserving winter wildlands and a quality human-powered snowsports experience on public lands. The following Backcountry Partners have joined the program this past year. For a full list of Backcountry Partners, please visit our website. Please help us in keeping these partners a vibrant part of your community!

Winter Wildlands Alliance thanks the following businesses for supporting our Backcountry Partner Program.

40 Tribes Backcountry
Aiare
Alpenglow Sports
Alpine Ambitions
Backcountry Babes
Backwoods Mountain Sports
Bear Valley Ski Resort
Chair 2 Board Sports
Dusk 2 Dawn
Exum Mountain Guides
Free Heel and Wheel
Gravity Sports
Ice Axe
Idaho Mountain Touring
Mountain Rider Alliance
Onion River Sports
Outdoor Research
Packer Expeditions
Payette Lakes Yurts
Payette Powder Guides
Pedal Your Turns
Pine Needle Mountaineering
Powder Ridge Ski Tours
Red Mountain Pass
Rendezvous
Rich Meyer Alpine Guide
Sawtooth Guides
Ski Haus
Skinny Skis
Summit Flags
Sun Valley Trekking
Sunrise Retreat
Teton Backcountry Guides
The Ascending Path
The Elephant's Perch
The High Camp Hut
The Mountaineer
Wanderlust Tours



SnowSchool Keeps Pace with 21st Century Science Education

A program of Winter Wildlands Alliance, SnowSchool is an unforgettable winter adventure that combines hands-on science education with outdoor snowshoe exploration for 28,000

K-12 students each winter. SnowSchool is evolving to keep pace with major changes happening across the country's educational landscape.

Chances are you've heard about the education reforms happening across the country right now. A coalition of twenty-six states has led the development of the Next Generation Science Standards. This new educational framework moves American science instruction away from a presentation of mere facts, and towards more contextualized and meaningful science learning. This development has also coincided with the National Governor's Association-led creation of the Common Core State Standards for mathematics and language arts. With a majority of states adopting one or both of these reforms the result is big changes in American education.

To keep SnowSchool up to date amidst these changes WWA has been working hard to align the program with the new national standards. SnowSchool has always been about introducing youth to the wonders of their local winter landscape and fostering ecological

literacy among students. At WWA we believe our ability to achieve this goal is greatly enhanced by aligning SnowSchool with new developments in education. We have updated our 2013 SnowSchool Curriculum and Activity guide to align with the new national standards and will continue to make changes to program curriculum.

To stay relevant in the new world of science education, WWA has been developing components of the SnowSchool program that create dynamic classroom learning experiences which in turn connect to learning experiences in the winter environment. Results include sixth grade students working with hydrologists in the classroom to construct a model of their local watershed system prior to their snowshoe field trip. And this winter at the high school level SnowSchool students will work with snow scientists to gather local snowpack data and, once back in the classroom, compare the data with historical trends. Through these modifications SnowSchool participants are transformed into passionate student scientists and snowshoe explorers.

As we work to implement these ideas on a national scale, your continued support of WWA helps provide an exciting SnowSchool experience for thousands of students across the country.

Kerry McClay
National SnowSchool Director
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Celebrate Winter Membership Special

This holiday season give the gift of a Winter Wildlands Alliance membership and help protect the winter places you play. WWA's Celebrate Winter membership special is a perfect gift for your favorite backcountry enthusiast, or for yourself, and includes an awesome Ambler hat, a subscription to Backcountry Magazine or Cross Country Skier Magazine and a limited edition Snow Less Traveled sticker—all for just \$50! There's no better way to celebrate the season and your support makes a positive impact!

Join online at winterwildlands.org and click JOIN US or call Brittany Jones at 208.336.4203 ext. 2

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Support Winter Wildlands Alliance today.

Contact us today to find out how you can contribute!

Call (208)336-4203 or visit us on the web at www.winterwildlands.org

Get Involved!

Follow Winter Wildlands Alliance on Facebook and Twitter, contact your local group and volunteer, attend a Backcountry Film Festival showing in your community and take a stand for winter - Become a Member today!

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