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The Clearwater will now focus efforts on creating a Motor Vehicle Use Map that will display the travel management decision for Forest users. WWA and our members look forward to working with forest officials in the implementation of the plan including outreach efforts to educate winter recreationists of new winter travel regulations.

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Become a fan of Winter Wildlands Alliance on Facebook and Twitter to follow our regular updates and content!

Clearwater National Forest Gets it Right with Winter Planning

Backcountry Film Festival Goes Global

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Collectively, this year’s Backcountry Film Festival raised more than $90,000 dollars for our Grassroots Member Groups and SnowSchool sites. The dollars raised benefited local communities by funding outdoor education programs, avalanche centers, purchasing winter equipment and advocating for human-powered winter activities.

Planning for next year’s Backcountry Film Festival is already underway. If the Backcountry Film Festival did not make it to your community please give us a holler and let us know how we can bring the festival to you. Thank you in advance for your continued support and involvement - we look forward to the shared adventure.

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Winter Wildlands Alliance relies on our members to continue our work in protecting the pristine and beautiful backcountry places we all enjoy year after year. If you are a backcountry skier, snowshoer, winter hiker, or simply enjoy the peace and quiet of a cold snowy day we need your support! Become a member today. Visit us at www.winterwildlands.org or call Lana at (208)336-4205.
Yellowstone Winter Use Plan Inches Toward Resolution

As noted in the winter issue of Trail Break, Yellowstone National Park officials last fall delayed release of the long-anticipated Winter Use Plan for one more year in order to conduct additional analysis necessary “sustainable” plan.

The good news is that during the recent scoping period for the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on a final plan, WWA and our coalition partners rallied our constituents to submit more than 64,000 comment letters advocating for a final rule that holds over-snow vehicle numbers at or below the level of the past five years. The five-year period of lower vehicle numbers and higher standards for noise and emissions is a direct result of legal action by WWA and our partners and has led to a remarkable recovery for Yellowstone’s winter ecosystem, wildlife and visitor enjoyment.

The next step will be the release of a final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement with a new range of alternatives. This will be followed by a 60-day comment period during which it will again be important that WWA marshal strong public support for a plan that safeguards against the return of higher numbers of over-snow vehicle numbers and their negative impacts on Park resources. During this period, WWA and our coalition partners will also continue direct dialogue with Interior and Park officials to ensure a final winter transportation plan that protects the park and improves the visitor experience. A final long-term plan is now scheduled to be released in November 2012.

Mark Moisan, Executive Director

www.yellowstonewild.com

Aerial Surveys Document Positive Impact of Winter Wilderness Stewardship Project

With support from LightHawk and David Stubble Photography, Winter Wildlands Alliance continues to monitor and document illegal motorized incursions in the Greater Yellowstone region. For the past three years WWA has conducted aerial photography surveys of the Jedediah Smith Wilderness, Winiger Hole Wilderness, and the winter-restricted areas on Mount Jefferson. In March 2012, the southwest corner of Yellowstone National Park was also included in the aerial survey.

Photographs of the southwest corner of the Teton Range and the Jedediah Smith Wilderness. Photo by David Stubble with support from LightHawk.

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Stewardship Project

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Educational Recreational Adventures – Portland, Oregon

Educational Recreational Adventures (ERA) joined the SnowSchool network in January 2011. Since then ERA has had huge success in launching its winter programming by providing outreach trips to students in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Working with local partners and a highly trained staff, ERA develops just the right mix of challenges, winter ecology, survival and sciences to meet the goals of each group.

ERA was also highly involved in testing and participating in the 2011-12 Backcountry Film Festival, raising more than $2000 from their event in Hood River, Oregon. Proceeds were used to purchase snowshoes and support ERA winter programs. ERA also conducts programs in cross-country skiing, fly fishing (Western and Japanese), traditional archery, backcountry and canoeing.

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Cailin O’Brien-Feeney Joins WWA as Policy Coordinator

WWA welcomes Cailin O’Brien-Feeney as our new Policy Coordinator. Cailin joined WWA in May and is working from the Boise office. He will focus on recreation policy issues in Idaho and the Inland Northwest. Cailin has a long history with WWA, both in the backcountry and in the office. He will focus on recreation policy issues in Idaho and the Inland Northwest.

This year, in particular, no mention of Skinny Skis would be complete without offering heartfelt condolences and deep respect to the coworkers, friends, and family of Steve Romeo who died in an avalanche on the Jackson Backcountry this winter. Romeo Steve, as he was known to his thousands of followers on his blog, Texas AV, was a longtime employee at Skinny Skis. His infectious enthusiasm for all things backcountry and his warm smile will sorely be missed.

WWA Hosts Landmark Partnership Summit

Last December, WWA and the other members of Outdoor Alliance hosted the first ever Partnership Summit in Golden, Colorado. This groundbreaking event aimed to learn from successful partnerships between Federal land managers and local advocates for human-powered winter recreation. Attended by 150 land managers and their counterparts from grassroot advocacy groups, the Summit covered 19 different success stories, from river restoration projects to innovative mountain bike trail building. In plenary sessions and small groups, pairs of agency staff and local advocates told their partnership stories, followed by discussions aimed at finding the common themes between each success.

One top success story was WWA’s flagship SnowSchool site at Bogus Basin, Idaho. No case better illustrated how an effective partnership between a land manager and a local organization can get more kids outside — growing SnowSchool from a pilot season of 180 kids to a current total of 350 kids introduced to winter recreation and ecology. Along with the SnowSchool case study, many of the discussions at the Summit covered winter recreation and the important role partnerships play in protecting year-round recreation.

Attendees left the Summit energized by the success stories and better equipped to build more partnerships in their own places. Outdoor Alliance has published a report from the Summit, available at outdooralliance.net, which carries the lessons learned to land managers and members of the human-powered community interested in fostering new partnerships.

Corporate Partners

Backcountry Spotlight

Corporate Partners

The Inland Northwest Backcountry Alliance

The Inland Northwest Backcountry Alliance (INBA) is a grassroots organization whose mission is to advocate for and protect human-powered winter recreation within the Inland Northwest, a region that includes western Washington, northern Idaho, and eastern Oregon. INBA’s goals include building community among human-powered winter recreation enthusiasts, educating others about the value of quiet, non-motorized winter recreation, creating opportunities for quiet, non-motorized winter recreation, and advocating for the proposed Stevens Peak Backcountry Winter Non-Motorized Area.

The Stevens Peak backcountry comprises approximately 350 acres in the Idaho Payette and Lolo National Forests located near the Idaho-Montana state line. Because of its subalpine terrain, snow, and accessibility, the area has long been popular with snowshoers, cross-country skiers, backcountry skiers, and snowboarders. Quiet winter recreation in the Stevens Peak backcountry is being displaced by increasing snowmobiling usage and the proposed expansion of Lookout Pass Ski Area.

The Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) is currently completing the revision of its Forest Plan. IPNF and WWA are working with forest officials to secure opportunities for human-powered snowmobiling through a comprehensive winter recreation planning process for the Stevens Peak backcountry.

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Grassroots Members

Grassroots Spotlight

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