



# Middle Fork Ranger District



## 2016 Accomplishments

### Wilderness and Trails Program



◆ A total of 283 miles of trail were cleared in the 2016 field season by members of the MFRD Wilderness program and partner organizations which included the following; the Montana Conservation Corps, the Student Conservation Association, the Selway-Bitterroot-Frank Church Foundation, Wild Idaho Outfitters, Middle Fork

Outfitters, and the Middle Fork Lodge Outfitters. Highlights this year included the opening of the Marble Creek trail #4222 in cooperation with the Payette National Forest and the Treasure Valley Backcountry Horsemen. This trail had not been fully cleared in over 15 years. A multi-year effort on the South Fork of Camas Creek trail # 4125 and Pioneer Creek trail #4113 were also noteworthy.

- ◆ Wilderness Rangers conducted assessments of trails, trail maintenance, and baseline Wilderness Character observations in the newly created Jim McClure-Jerry Peak (JMJP) Wilderness. Staff time was also spent writing and compiling data for the JMJP Wilderness Management Plan.
- ◆ Wilderness staff along with the Middle Fork River Patrol and volunteers from the Idaho Aviation Association completed maintenance at the Bernard Airstrip in May. Maintenance items included painting of airstrip boundary markers, clearing of encroaching brush, trees, and grass, and the moving of additional soil to the airstrip surface (with mules Mike and Ike) to fix ruts and low spots.
- ◆ Numerous positive public contacts and Wilderness information sharing occurred in both the front-country and backcountry environments this season while staff cleaned campsites, completed trail surveys, and removed the ever-present rocks and debris from Forest trails.
- ◆ Employees also worked as Resource Advisors in support of wildland fire management on the Forest.
- ◆ Wilderness Program staff conducted traditional tool trainings (crosscut saw bucking and felling, axe use, trail maintenance and construction) as well as pack and saddle stock training.



### Invasive Species

In 2016, the Invasive Species program had a productive and safe work season, continuing their cooperative work with partners to survey, treat and monitor invasive plant throughout the south zone of the forest. With the assistance of state, counties and cooperative weed management area members, plus the Student Conservation Association, over **4,814 acres of invasive plants were treated** using a combination of mechanical, chemical and biological techniques.



A few highlights of our 2016 season were:

- ◆ 388 treatment activities on Challis-Yankee Fork, Middle Fork, & Lost River districts
- ◆ 4 Biological control releases specific to Spotted Knapweed
- ◆ Combined our crew efforts with Custer County Weeds on C-YF District's Weeds accomplishments specifically in the Yankee Fork Drainage.
- ◆ Student Conservation Association (SCA) actively assisted with work on the Sage Grouse Improvement Project by mapping infestations and treating infestations.
- ◆ Worked with Butte County Weeds on Lost River District's Weeds accomplishments.
- ◆ Completed 2 float trips where all the Campsites in the River corridor were inventoried and treated for noxious weeds.
- ◆ Hosted a cooperative spray day with Forest Service, Custer & Lemhi County, and Fish & Game participants.
- ◆ Lemhi County treated State Lands in the River Corridor.



### Middle Fork of the Salmon River

The river program provided an outstanding recreation experience to 11,528 boaters as they floated this 104-mile wild and scenic river. Remote guard stations were staffed throughout the high-use float season, May 2th to Oct. 11th. In 2016, launch site and river patrol personnel.



Noteworthy items:

- ◆ Educated over 3,500 private boaters about wilderness ethics, leave-no-trace practices, heritage protection, and Chinook Salmon at the launch sites.
- ◆ Inspected over 2,500 private boats for aquatic invasive species.
- ◆ Upgraded launch site solar batteries to provide more efficient service.
- ◆ Continued to provide the public with online reservations and lotteries within the Recreation.gov platform and work with Recreation OneStop to meet the Presidential E-Initiatives.
- ◆ Worked with Forest Engineers to find a solution to the reduction of water at the Boundary Creek spring which provides water to 4 seasonal employees and over 10,000 river users.
- ◆ The Heritage Action Team (HAT) was established with agency, outfitter, private and Shoshone-Bannock representation to implemented the Historic Preservation Plan standards and guidelines. A HAT float trip was utilized to discuss cultural resources and recreation management issues.
- ◆ Produced two interpretive videos for cultural resource protection.
- ◆ Worked on archeologically sensitive camps to discourage and prevent boaters from camping in and near sensitive areas such as pit houses, pictograph areas and historical features.
- ◆ Installed the Sheepsteer interpretive sign at Boundary Creek.
- ◆ Hosted Native American Interpreter Diana Yupe, who provides a preservation message to visitors at Indian Creek.
- ◆ Removed 445 pounds of trash, wreckage, and miscellaneous garbage from the river corridor.
- ◆ Provided river support to various forest programs including weeds, trails, fisheries, heritage, engineer and fire crews.
- ◆ Notified boaters of the 14 Chinook salmon redds and provided instruction on avoidance measures to minimize disturbance.
- ◆ Employees completed various trainings including; cross-cut saw, wilderness first responder, swift water rescue, Chinook redd training, fire fighter and forest protection officer training.

