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Photo courtesy of David Kallenbach



Continuing the work we started last summer, the ABWF and its volunteers will be working on the upper stretches of the Senia Creek Trail, building new trail atop Red Lodge Creek Plateau 12 miles west of Red Lodge. Last year, 17 volunteers rerouted a new 0.7 mile long stretch of the trail; this year we hope to finish it by connecting it to the trail down to Crow Lake.

We are looking for 10-12 volunteers for this project. It is a fairly strenuous work, involving trail-building at nearly 10,000 feet, although this year the Forest Service will be blasting out the trail ahead of time, so we can come in behind and finish it off. The work requires camping out for multiple days in a gorgeous panoramic location, so this is a great working vacation! Come for a few days or the whole thing.

AUGUST 15TH-20TH (THURSDAY-TUESDAY): RED LODGE CREEK PLATEAU TRAIL BUILDING PROJECT



"It is the mission of the Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness Foundation to support stewardship of the Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness and to foster appreciation of wild lands."

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Two summers ago the ABWF sponsored a set of weed eradication projects and helped fund scientific efforts to better understand remnant glaciers tucked away in the high country. It was a small effort, to be sure, but reflective of our desire to begin having an impact on the ground. In 2012, we significantly added to our project offerings: two trail projects, including a major multi-day project; a Weeds Day; two scientific monitoring expeditions to the Grasshopper and Rearguard glaciers; and we helped with a variety of public awareness/education efforts. We also hired a Wilderness intern who kept busy on trails the entire summer.

This coming summer we plan to expand that output yet again-sponsoring three Wilderness Interns to spread around the A-B. We have three major multi-day trail projects planned, and

a couple of smaller ones around National Trails Day. We have a Slough Creek cabin-based volunteer project planned, two weeds days, and the launch of a 'Citizen Science' campaign focused on the Whitebark Pine. All of this, of course, means we really need to get out the volunteer work forces. Help us by spreading the word and staying mindful of the saying: **'Many hands make light work.'**

VOLUNTEER.

Volunteering for projects that help with the stewardship of the A-B Wilderness is the heart of why the ABWF exists. Here, the 2013 projects are laid out for your consideration. Since it is not too early to plan for your summer, we hope that you will consider one or more of our Wilderness projects with all the fun and fruitful benefits that come with each.

OUR SPRING FLING FUNDRAISER: CHASING ICE, A DOCUMENTARY:

This year we thought we'd reach out to our supporters and our communities a little differently. For our 'Spring Fling' Fundraiser, we are bringing the powerful documentary film, **Chasing Ice**, to Montana for 3 showings-in Billings, Red Lodge and Livingston, April 20th, April 28th, and May 9th. Short-listed for an Academy award, this unforgettable film was a winner for cinematography at Sundance. It follows National Geographic photographer James Balog in his quest to train cameras on some of the world's grandest, most inhospitable glaciers and ice-fields-from Greenland to Alaska, Iceland to Montana-and capture the changes they are undergoing in stunning time-lapse photography.

Join us for any of these three screenings:

- **Saturday, April 20th, 7 p.m.** @ Losekamp Hall on the Rocky Mountain College Campus, Billings, 13th and Poly Dr.
- **Sunday, April 28th, 3 p.m.** @ the Roman Theater in downtown Red Lodge for a Matinee showing
- **Thursday, May 9th, 7 p.m.** @ The Shane Center, 415 E. Lewis, in Livingston

Tickets are \$7.00; \$5.00 for students and children under 12. Tickets purchased at the door. Doors open 45 minutes prior to showtime.

Proceeds go to the ABWF and help fund our Wilderness projects. Go to www.abwilderness.org for more details.



A GENERAL GUIDE TO OUR PROJECTS:

The ABWF sponsors projects that fall into one of four basic categories: 1) Trail maintenance and building; 2) Invasive Weed eradication; 3) Citizen Science projects; and 4) Education/Awareness programs. Our goal is to offer a variety of projects that will appeal to many ages, abilities, and interests.

Difficulty: Some projects are a single day in length, while quite a few are multi-day undertakings. We provide descriptions of the projects through our website, newsletters, and via emails and flyers. Included is information about the location of the project and nature of the work we are doing as well as the level of difficulty of a given project. Trail projects are typically the most difficult due to the challenges of accessing the backcountry (often on foot, potentially backpacking) and the physical demands of the work (using trail tools like pulaskis, picks, shovels, moving rock & gravel, etc).

Cost: Free! Food is provided, whether for single or multi-day events. The ABWF also provides tools, safety gear/First Aid, and group camping gear (stoves, cookware, etc.). For overnights, you provide your own bedding, a tent/shelter, and personal gear and clothing.

Transport and Access: You will need to transport yourself to the trailhead or rendezvous spot. We will try to coordinate carpooling wherever possible. On multi-day projects we try to have a horse-packer haul in our tools, food, supplies, and some of your heavier personal gear into camp, saving you from having to haul a heavy pack in to your volunteer experience. You will need to enjoy hiking!

The Benefits? Spending time in the Wilderness. Physical activity in a healthy setting. Working with and getting to know other volunteers. The satisfaction of hard work, well done, and for the worthiest of causes-our Wilderness. A sense of accomplishment at the end of a day.

Sign Up: Go to our website at www.abwilderness.org. There will be a button that says 'Sign up for this Project' that will add you to a sign-up list in the order in which you signed up. Or you can simply send us an email to info@abwilderness.org.

We try to accommodate anyone who wishes to volunteer. Groups are welcome. These volunteer work experiences can be great family time. The nature of the work tends to favor teenagers and older. If you have any reservations about whether a project is right for you or your group, please contact us directly.

THE PROJECTS:

SATURDAY, JUNE 1ST-9:30 A.M. NATIONAL TRAILS DAY! PASSAGE CREEK PROJECT, SOUTH OF LIVINGSTON

Forty-five minutes from Livingston, via Mill Creek, is the popular Passage Creek Trailhead. For National Trails Day, we need volunteers to spend a work day with the ABWF and the Forest Service, clearing and improving trail in the Passage Creek/Wallace Creek area. The day will require a hike of 2.5 to 3 miles into the work site(s), and consists of moderate to more strenuous type work using basic trail tools. There will be a little something for everyone who comes to help. So grab a friend and come out for National Trails Day and show your support for local trails.



SATURDAY, JUNE 8TH, 2013-'THE PALISADES TRAIL' PROJECT-RED LODGE A COMMUNITY TRAIL-BUILDING EVENT FOR NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

A few years ago, the greater community of Red Lodge came out in droves to build a phenomenal children's playground in a single weekend and had a lot of fun doing it. On Saturday, June 8th, the ABWF and the Beartooth Recreational Trails Association (BRTA) are cosponsoring a similar effort to build the 'Palisades Trail' on the western edge of Red Lodge. This is a community wide event! We are looking for lots and lots of volunteers-all ages, abilities and groups are welcome-to come out for a "Community Trails Day" that will build this new, highly-anticipated 2.5 mile trail along the face of Red Lodge Mountain from Palisades Campground to the end of Fox Lane. There will be many, varied tasks to be done: cutting and improving the new trail, clearing out brush from the path, carrying supplies, etc. A celebratory picnic will follow. When we are done, the Community of Red Lodge will have a new trail to hike, ski, bike, and enjoy--tantalizingly close to town! This is the trail we have asked for, so let's get outside and make it a reality!

Thank you to the Forest Service for making this trail happen, and also to Pro-Cut Green Lawn service of Red Lodge for the grant to recruit, feed, equip, and celebrate our love for trails.



Photo courtesy of Brett French of the Gazette

WHITEBARK PINE SURVEY-'CITIZEN SCIENCE' PROJECT-LATE JUNE THROUGH MID-SEPTEMBER

Citizen Science seeks legions of everyday folks who are interested in helping conduct scientific surveys and research. Citizens willing to donate their time and love of hiking into remote areas around the A-B Wilderness can collect data to a far greater degree than scientists by themselves. The iconic Whitebark Pine is unique to tree-line environments of the northern Rockies yet is threatened because of mountain pine beetle, blister rust infestations, and a changing climate. Grizzlies & Clark's Nutcrackers depend on WBP seeds for protein; decreased cone production has significant impacts on these keystone species.

The ABWF is working with the organizations Clean Air/Cool Planet and the Union of Concerned Scientists to utilize Citizen Scientists to locate, identify and assess the health of whitebark pine stands in the A-B Wilderness. With some basic training in identification of WBP, some map and GPS skills, and careful record keeping, adventurous volunteers can help us gather information on the Whitebark pine. We are planning a clinic for prospective helpers in late June to organize and train volunteers. We'll then depend on you to help collect data. Stay tuned for details....



Photo courtesy of Adam Markham

FRI/SAT/SUN, JULY 27-28: BRIDGE CREEK WEEDS WEEKEND- 2 - DAYS SOUTH OF BIG TIMBER



We need Weed Warriors! Bridge Creek flows into the Main Boulder River at Hicks Park near the end of the road south of Big Timber. Oxeye daisy, houndstongue, and leafy spurge are all invasive weeds found here that need to be knocked out, and we need your help. There is no bigger threat to the Wilderness integrity than noxious weeds; with enough volunteers we'll make headway pulling them by hand, but in some cases we may need to spray. We will convene on Friday night, have a great time camping 2 nights at the trailhead, and dayhike into the worst areas of infestation. This is an opportunity to help on an easier to moderate project.

UPPER STILLWATER RIVER TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT- JULY 16TH-24TH (TUESDAY-WEDNESDAY)

To the northwest of Cooke City and Daisy Pass are the headwaters of the Stillwater River and the start of the classic 30-mile trail that ends near the Stillwater Mine outside Nye, Montana. The ABWF needs 20 able volunteers to work at the improvement of this trail north of the wilderness boundary and Abundance Lake. Water has badly eroded the trail and we need to add water bars, shore up the trail, and fill in a lot of dirt/gravel. We'll be working alongside a Forest Service crew for the duration.

This multi-day effort requires overnight camping at a base camp down the trail 5-6 miles from the Wilderness boundary. We will shuttle volunteers (it's a 4WD road) into the trailhead from Daisy Pass. A mule team will haul in all tools, equipment, and group/personal supplies into camp. You provide only your own shelter and sleeping gear. The work will be fairly strenuous in difficulty, but there will be work for all abilities; you needn't be a pack mule or labor like Hercules to help. We will split this 9-day project into two phases of 5 days each. Because of the remoteness ideally we're looking for volunteers who can commit to a 4-5 day stint. July 16-24.



Photo courtesy Allie Wood, USFS

AUGUST 1ST-5TH SLOUGH CREEK CABIN WORK WEEKEND

Sign up for this one-of-a-kind opportunity to spend five days at the cabin at the historic Slough Creek Guard Station and work on projects such trail improvements, tackling invasive weeds, and cabin maintenance. Slough Creek flows out of the A-B Wilderness into the Lamar Valley of Yellowstone, an area known for its wildlife and lazy streams. The ABWF will try to bring in guest intellectual entertainment for this trip!



While it's a long hike in (via Wolverine Creek) through fairly easy terrain, we have the opportunity to transport into the Silvertip Ranch by horse and wagon, then hike the final two miles to the cabin. The work itself is of moderate difficulty. We'll utilize the cabin during our stay, but there is not space for everyone to sleep inside. It's one day in, three days of work, and a day back for the 5-day project. Hurry! This will likely be a popular trip. Maximum of 12 participants.